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THE LIVING DRAMA

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HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND MODERN
MOVEMENTS VISUALIZED

A DRAMA OF THE DRAMA

BY

NELLIE BURGET MILLER



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New York & London

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To

MRS. THOMAS GERALD WINTER .

under whose leadership it was
accomplished and whose en-
couragement made it possible

FOREWORD

THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS TEXT

MANY study groups are seeking help in the study of modern drama, but it is impossible to comprehend recent movements without some knowledge of the history and development of the art. There is a continuity, an abiding spirit, which must be acknowledged and understood. To read a modern play without reference to past traditions is like looking at a garden without reference to the sky above it or the trees that inclose it. The garden is a part of the landscape, and the play is a part of a dramatic movement which goes back some three thousand years.

This study will endeavor to present, in simple and concise form, a survey of this continuous dramatic movement from its earliest recorded expression to contemporary moments under a single cover. Since to know thoroughly the dramatic output of any one period might command the industry of a lifetime, the task is a colossal one and precludes any pretense at completeness; the treatment is suggestive rather than informative, and should be supplemented by a study of the plays indicated under each section. After all, the important thing is not the painful piling of fact upon fact but gaining an intelligent working knowledge of the whole and knowing exactly where to turn for detail when it is needed.

The information has been gathered from many works upon the various phases, to which the writer is deeply indebted, all of which are indicated in the bibliographies.

We purpose, then, to take a sort of "Cook's Tour" over the whole domain of the drama, touching the main points of interest, and leaving the reader to return and explore at leisure.

The whole movement by which primitive dramatic expression became perfected art may be visualized as a continuous performance, a *drama* in itself, corresponding roughly to the structure of a Greek tragedy. If, instead of remembering a playwright here and a play there through the centuries, one looks at the whole development as a drama with its impulses analogous to the episodes of the classic play and its comparatively dormant periods when the unity must be preserved by means of the Chorus with its recital of distant events, there will be discovered a surprising unity of action running through these apparently disconnected movements, binding them into an unforgettable whole. Curiously enough it will be found that each of these great impulses toward dramatic expression is dominated by three characters, just as later Greek Tragedy permitted three actors upon its stage.

For the sake of visualizing this slow-moving drama of the centuries, the subject-matter of Part One has been arranged in the following rather arbitrary sequence:

The Prologue: The Place of the Drama among the Arts

The Parade: Primitive Dramatic Expression and Mythological Backgrounds

The First Episode: Ancient Classical Drama

Greek Tragedy

Greek Comedy

Roman Influence

Hebrew Dramatic Expression

The Choral Interlude: Medieval Mysteries and Miracles

The Second Episode: Elizabethan Drama

The Third Episode: Continental Drama

Spanish Drama

The Drama in France

Early German Drama

The Closing Choral Ode: English Transitions

The Exode: Looking Backward over the Eighteenth Century

The Epilogue: Lament for the Tragic Muse

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PART ONE

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

From the beginning until now, from the nameless poets of the earliest Scriptures down to Robert Browning, the spirit of man when most profoundly moved to creative utterance in literature has been and is, through countless manifestations, one and abiding.

—John Drinkwater in *The Outline of Literature*

THE LIVING DRAMA

THE PROLOGUE

THE PLACE OF THE DRAMA AMONG THE ARTS

Some one has said, "The laws of each art are convertible into every other. Raphael paints wisdom; Handel sings it; Phidias carves it; Shakespeare writes it." To this we may add, Christ lives it. Which, after all, is only another way of saying that art is universal and eternal.

In the beginning the arts were one, infolded in divine creative impulse. When God created the earth by assembling the rhythmic vibrations and arranging the chaotic elements according to a pre-conceived plan or pattern, that was *poetry*; when He molded the mountains and hollowed out a bed for the great watercourses, that was *sculpture*; when He clothed the hills with verdure of green and gold and washed the purple shadows over the desert sage, that was *painting*; when He adjusted the tides and suns with a mathematical precision that is beyond our finite comprehension, that was *music*; when He peopled the earth and started His pygmy creation forth on its eternal quest of Spirit, that was *drama*. "I will remember only that drama is spirit speaking to spirit," declares Sheldon Cheney in *The Art of the Theater*.

Of all the arts the drama is most closely related to life, since the material it uses for its production is life itself. We study music for the exaltation of spirit which it produces through the medium of sound; we study pictures for the emotions which they produce through the medium of color and of form; we study literature for the enrichment of our consciousness through the medium of words; we study drama because there life itself goes by us in review, not in picture or symbol, but molded from illusive and perishable human stuff.

For the great mass of mankind life must be commonplace, a succession of matter-of-fact duties, a conventional round of work and relaxation. Opportunity for heroic adventure comes to comparatively few, and for the unheroic masses some diversion from the discontent of inaction and meaningless mediocrity becomes a positive need.

Drama opens the doors of adventure; it releases the spirit. There one may run the round of pleasure and pain, vicariously; rise to the heights of accomplishment or explore the haunts of misery and vice without soiling the garment's hem; there the unlovely and the unloved may breathe the air of romance and the awkward and ugly sit at ease in kings' palaces.

The appeal of the drama is universal. One may be insensible to the delicately blended overtones of a symphony, insensible to the color piled thick in the evening sky, insensible to the shades of meaning in the spoken word, and still find the keenest pleasure in the swift movement of the drama. For nearly three thousand years the drama has been one of the chief sources of inspiration and entertainment for the human race.

THE PARODE

PRIMITIVE DRAMATIC EXPRESSION AND MYTHOLOGICAL BACKGROUNDS

And now I know 't is more than an old song
Wrought by a poet of his sweet desire—
For Pan still wanders the slow stream along,
Bacchantes dance round every midnight fire;
And from the hills where purple shadows throng
Steals the low music of a vanished lyre.

—Arthur Davison Ficke

PRIMITIVE DRAMATIC EXPRESSION

WE are not surprised to find, since the drama is produced from the material of life, that it is the oldest of all the arts. The effort to tell a story by crude movement and gesture antedates spoken language. When we speak of the origin of the drama with the Greeks, we refer to its literary form. For the beginning of dramatic expression we must go back much further than that—back to the diversions of primitive peoples—and we find that there was no time so remote and no people so low in the scale of civilization that need for dramatic expression was not evidenced. We draw our conclusions about primitive days and ways largely from investigation of certain tribes living in Central Australia to-day, the lowest in social development at the present.

We find among the Bushmen of Australia a distinct dramatic spectacle in imitation of the hunt. The orchestra is composed of women who urge the actors on to a great pitch of excitement with their weird chanting and monotonous beating upon their skin-drums. A part of the actors are

disguised as animals, feeding quietly in the moonlight. The hunters surround them with great craft, and so intense is the excitement that a slight accident may turn the audience into a howling mob ready for a hand in the fray. From the Aleutian Islands comes the description of the drama of the hunter and the bird. The actor dressed in imitation of a great bird eludes the hunter, pretends to be wounded, feigns death, and prolongs the chase to the great delight of the spectators. Among the Eskimos of Alaska the Inviting-In Feast is celebrated in a dramatic dance, which is an appeal to the spirits represented by masked actors for future success in hunting.¹

Our own American Indians dramatize their myths and legends in their well-known ritual dances. The dancers represent animals or superior beings whose history the myths recount. The sun-dance and the butterfly-dance of the Hopis are instances of primitive expression of emotion through action from which the drama idea grew. With the Indians the dance is often combined with gesture and chant. The chieftain, enacting the vengeance he is about to work upon his enemy, pauses in the dance to utter a blood-curdling battle-cry, pounces upon his combatant in fancy, and holds aloft his severed scalp; he then resumes his dance in a renewed ecstasy of motion.

Dancing was one of the earliest modes of expression. Savages danced before they started upon their battles to incite them to reckless daring; they danced upon their return to celebrate their victory or bewail their defeat. They used the dance to celebrate the wedding festival and as a dirge to the departed; it expressed joy or sorrow; it also expressed worship.

Among the Egyptians, where we find the oldest recorded civilization, we find dancing, both sensuous and religious, but no true dramatic development. The Egyptians were luxury-

¹ See *Development of the Drama*, Brander Matthews. Scribners.

loving and subservient; they never struggled to any great extent to preserve their liberty, and out of struggle the drama was born. The same thing might be said of the Babylonians. The tragedy which grew so naturally out of Greek soil found no root there. The Hebrews were a nation specialized in a remarkable degree to religion and left us one great drama in which Jehovah himself is the protagonist. They used the dance in worship as most peoples have done in their early history and as many still do. David danced before the Lord when he brought the Ark from Shiloh; Miriam's song of deliverance as she danced before her maidens on the shore of the Red Sea was a ballad-dance.

With the beginnings of agriculture and settled existence dramatic expression took on a different form. Imitation of industries and occupations supplanted that of warlike raids and the chase. In the Nile Valley evidences of ancient dances imitating the waving of grain, the casting of nets, and the rocking of boats are found.

In Egypt there was at least one religious festival which simulated the passion-plays of a much later day. The life, tragic death, and resurrection of Osiris were celebrated in a sort of dramatic spectacle which lasted about five days. Such a passion-play survives also in Persia.

Although a real dramatic literature never developed in Western Asia comparable to that of Greece, England, France, and Spain, yet we do find evidences of a primitive drama which was a very potent force in religious observance. In China dramatic dances were held in the ancestral temples in the days of Confucius; in India we have a religious drama of pre-Buddhistic origin; Japanese serious drama sprang from the dramatic dances of Shinto worship. China had a remarkable creative period in the thirteenth century, producing more than five hundred plays and eighty-five playwrights.

"In the beginning"—there is a great fascination about the beginning of things, whether it is the evolving of a world from chaos or the development of an art, and the student

who purposes to make a serious study of the drama will not wish to pass over the dawn of dramatic expression among primitive peoples.

Oft from the sleepy lair
Start giant shapes of fear and hope
That, aptly read, declare
Our deepest nature. God in dreams
Hath spoken to the wise;
And in a people's mystic themes
A people's wisdom lies.¹

MYTHOLOGICAL BACKGROUNDS

Before taking up the study of the Greek poets who created the literary drama, it will be time well spent to make a survey of the ideas of the universe which the Hellenes formed and the legends which they recounted to explain the origin of the world and its natural phenomena. The mass of these legends which they used to account for the mysteries of life and nature we know as mythology.

We cannot read the poems of Homer or the plays of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides intelligently without some familiarity with Greek myths. We are unable to understand much in our modern poetry and drama without this background of mythology, for it runs through all literature like a golden thread, and we may not withdraw it without ruining the fabric. An entire year spent in the study of classic myths and their recurrence in art, literature, and music would prove most profitable and delightful; but if this is not practicable, there are certain very necessary bits of information which may be rather quickly acquired by a careful study of the diagrams representing the Greek idea of the universe and the genealogy of the gods.

The threads of the myth cross and recross, disappear and recur in the hero-stories, and we must not be too literal in our interpretations; we must remember that these stories were told for entertainment and delight and in their own

¹ J. S. Blackie.

time needed no explanation. Since then our whole conception of the universe has changed, and many ideas have become through the centuries obscure. We must study them for the revelation of the life and thought of a race in the childhood of the world, but a very strong, free, beauty-loving race which left an indelible impress upon the art and culture of all time; we must enjoy them for that inherent poetic beauty which has made them the delight of all ages, and in that sense the gods of Greece will become to us truly immortal.

GREEK IDEA OF THE UNIVERSE

The Greeks knew little of any other peoples. Their own country they located in the exact center of the universe, and it was known as Hellas and its people as Hellenes. It was bounded on the north by the icy caves of the happy and peaceful Hyperboreans, on the east by the equally happy and peaceful Ethiopians, on the south by the Pygmies, and on the west by the Elysian Fields, where mortals were sometimes transported to escape death, and where the souls of the dead lived in peace and well-being. Above them towered Mount Olympus where the gods dwelt, feasting, living, and loving about as mortals but without their limitations, and sometimes interfering very uncomfortably in the affairs of men. Above them was Heaven and below them was Hades, with a still lower depth of Tartarus to which they consigned their worst enemies. All this has come to us from the tales of Homer, and from Hesiod who transcribed his tales. Hesiod figured that the distance between Heaven and Hades was so great that an anvil falling from Heaven would require nine days to reach the earth, and nine more to fall from earth to Hades. Around the flat circular earth flowed the turbulent and deceitful Oceanus, governed by Poseidon and his daughters. Something must account for ships that never returned to harbor, and so the sirens were created. Other dreadful sea-creatures, such as the Gorgons, of whom

Medusa was one, with eyes so fierce and wild that whoever encountered their gaze was turned to stone, lurked in these unknown regions. The Gorgons were served by the Gray Sisters who figure in many a later supernatural tale. They add the horror element to Gordon Bottomley's recent play. The slaying of Medusa by Perseus was a favorite hero-story of the Greeks.

Somewhere in the dim twilight land lived the Daughters of the Night, who directed the mysteries of birth, life, and death. How else might one account for the cutting off of a life in the prime of physical vigor? Clotho, the youngest, spun the thread of life; Lachesis twisted it and made it firm; Atropos with her dreadful shears severed the thread when it pleased her to do so. These figures appear very frequently in the literature of the world.

THE GREATER DEITIES

Of the greater deities, Zeus, called by the Romans Jupiter, wielder of thunderbolts, ruled the heavens together with his wife Hera, called Juno by the Romans. This was after the dethroning of the father, Cronus, in the terrible Battle of the Giants. The defeated Titans were thrown into Tartarus with the Cyclops and hundred-handed monsters set to guard them; Poseidon, brother to Zeus, was given dominion over the sea, and Pluto, a second brother, permitted to rule Hades. The reign of Zeus was called the Silver Age. For the first time the year was divided into seasons, and heat and cold alternated; for the first time men had to work for their food. In the Golden Age of Cronus there had been no dearth nor discomfort. Zeus was styled the father of gods and men and was believed to be endowed with all wisdom, love, and power. Hera was the special guardian of the sanctity of the home, of mothers and children; but there was little of the dramatic in her story, and she does not figure largely in literature.

To Zeus and Hera was born a beautiful daughter, who symbolized perpetual youth, Hebe, cup-bearer to the gods

until an unfortunate stumble disgraced her and she was replaced by Ganymede. Ares, or Mars, the son of Zeus and Hera, was the fierce god of war, who was always driving his flaming chariot across the sky in a frenzy of destruction. He was not a strategist, clever in generalship, as was Athena, but appeared wherever battle raged, followed by his children, Fear and Terror. Soldiers appealed to the skill and foresight of Athena, who sprang full-grown and armed from the head of Zeus, to guide them in conflict. She represented wisdom and intellect, avoided the usual intrigues of the gods, and never married; she was considered sexless. Athena was the best loved of the Greek deities; she was the protector of the weak and the patron of arts and industries. In Ruskin's *Queen of the Air* a very beautiful description of the power of Athena may be found. She was called Minerva by the Romans.

Most beautiful of the gods was Apollo, god of light, and son of Zeus and Leto. As god of the sun he brought life to the fields; he was the patron of music, heard in the sound of waters and the song of birds. The gift of prophecy was also assigned to him, since he was the bringer of light. He is a favorite with poets, and one of his most beautiful tributes is found in the hymn by Shelley. The adventures of Apollo's son, Phaëton, who attempted to drive the chariot of the sun for a day, were said by the Greeks to be responsible for the desert places of Hellas. Driving too close to earth, Phaëton burned up the life of the fields. Calliope was the sweetest singer of the Nine Muses whom Apollo led and the mother of his son, Orpheus, the wonderful musician, who subdued the wild beasts with his lyre. The love of Orpheus and Eurydice has been made immortal in song and story.

Heaphæstus, or Vulcan, son of Zeus and Hera, was lame from birth. He was the god of fire and made many wonderful things for the gods; most wonderful the first woman, Pandora, who was sent as a gift of doubtful value to Epimetheus by Zeus. By her curiosity the secret box was opened and misery and despair let loose upon the world. The lame

blacksmith was given the most beautiful goddess, Aphrodite or Venus, for his wife. Around her son, Cupid, and his love for Psyche, the fancy of poet and painter loves to linger. The awakening of the soul at the approach of love, and the flight of love when suspicion comes in, is the meaning of the myth.

Reference to Cupid occurs fifty-two times in Shakespeare's plays.

From the many amours of Zeus most of the greater deities were supposed to come into existence. Of the seven sisters placed in the sky by Artemis, Maia was the eldest and the mother of a most remarkable infant.

The babe was born at peep of day;
He began playing with the lyre at noon, ,
And the same evening he did steal away
Apollo's herds.

Hermes, or Mercury, was the messenger of the gods, friend of travelers and patron of commerce, and also the patron of rogues and thieves. It is thought that he symbolized the wind in his swiftness, and that the herds of Apollo, which he drove away at so early an age, were white clouds. Artemis, goddess of the chase and of the moon, was sister to Apollo. She was an out-of-door spirit, a huntress, the Diana of the Romans. Her love for Endymion has been a frequent theme in poetry. One of the most beautiful descriptions of the goddess of the moon is found in Shelley's poem, *The Cloud*.

THE LESSER DEITIES

Hestia, called Vesta by the Romans, was the goddess of the hearth; she was sister to Zeus and never married, although she was wooed by both Poseidon and Apollo. Every home was her temple, and she was of importance in the council of the mighty ones.

Demeter, or Ceres, was goddess of harvests, and her search for her daughter, Persephone, who was carried off to Hades

by Pluto, is one of the most beautiful of the mythological stories. Persephone is vegetation, the life of the fields which disappears in the autumn. The restless autumn wails and searches for the lost life which returns to her in the spring.

Pan, god of wild nature and of shepherds and flocks, was supposed to be the son of Hermes and a wood-nymph. He had the body of a man and the feet of a goat; he is pictured with horns and pointed ears. He was the mischievous pet of the greater deities, and frequently peeps slyly out of the pages of some modern writer.

Aurora, goddess of the dawn, may still be seen in the eastern sky each morning with her floating robes of rose and silver. Aurora and Æolus, god of wind, are familiar figures in literature. The love of the goddess of dawn for a mortal, Tithonus, and his presumptuous wish which eventually turned him into a cricket, are the theme of a wonder-tale.

In the caves beneath the earth dwelt Mors, or Death, and his brother Somnus, or Sleep. The beautiful Nox, or Night, in her sable garments, was the mother of these twins. Before her door poppies bloomed. Poets from Homer to Shakespeare, from Vergil to Longfellow, have loved to picture Night in her sable robes and the dwelling of her grandson, Morpheus. Another interesting figure used by Shakespeare is Hecate, goddess of the black arts and mistress of incantations. She is pictured as a wretched woman who rejoiced in appearing as ugly and miserable as possible. Nemesis, or the law of compensation, figures in the story of Niobe and her children, immortalized in art and the poem of Byron. She represents justice, a true balance.

We are especially interested in Dionysus, god of wine, called Bacchus by the Romans, because of his relation to the origin of the drama. He was son of Zeus and the beautiful Semele, who was killed by beholding Zeus in his full splendor. The infant Dionysus was reared by wood-nymphs and intrusted to the training of a gross and tipsy tutor, Silenus, half goat and half man. Festivals in honor of the god of wine, known as the greater and lesser Dionysia, were cele-

brated in spring and autumn, and from these revels it is very generally believed that the Greek drama had its beginning.

Is this all that one needs to know of mythology to read the Greek poets who created the great tragedies? No, indeed! One needs also to remember that to the Hellenes all nature was instinct with life: the tree whispered with the presence of some dryad imprisoned there; nereids rode the snow-capped waves as they broke upon the shore; oreads, slim and tall, lured lonely travelers into mountain fastnesses. Man might be helped by the forces of nature to his ends or find himself perpetually in conflict with them. Unless we realize this personification of all natural phenomena, we shall not understand the tremendous struggles of the heroes in their conflict with the will of the gods, aided or thwarted by the forces of nature.

SOME MYTHOLOGICAL TALES FREQUENTLY MET IN MODERN LITERATURE, PAINTING, AND MUSIC

Narcissus and Echo

Narcissus, Keats

Narcissus, Nevin

Echo and Narcissus, painting by J. W. Waterhouse

Cupid and Psyche

The Earthly Paradise, William Morris

Old Greek Folk-stories, Josephine Preston Peabody

Pan and Psyche, painted by Sir Edward Burne-Jones

Raphael's frescoes of Cupid and Psyche in Chigi Palace

Diana and Endymion

Endymion, Keats

The Cloud, Shelley

Painting by Watts

Prometheus

Mrs. Browning's translation

Prometheus Unbound, Shelley

Prometheus Bound, by Adam le Jeune, in the Louvre

The Fire-bringer, William Vaughn Moody

Pandora

Mask of Pandora, Longfellow

Operetta by Le Massena

Paradise of Children, Hawthorne

Bacchus and Ariadne

Painting by Titian

Pygmalion and Galatea

Pygmalion, Bernard Shaw

Pluto and Persephone

Garden of Persephone, Swinburne

Demeter, Tennyson

The Return of Persephone, Florence Kiper Frank, *Drama Magazine* August-September, 1921.

The Return of Persephone, Lord Leighton

Orpheus and Eurydice

Opera by Gluck

Painting by Sir Frederick Leighton

Jason

The Golden Fleece, in *Life and Death of Jason*, by William Morris

Perseus

Perseus and the Medusa, Canova

Circe

The Wine of Circe, Sir Edward Burne-Jones

The Danaë

Painting by Titian

The Three Fates

Interpretation attributed to Michelangelo

MYTHOLOGY IN MARBLE

Laocoön Group in the Vatican

The Nine Muses in the Vatican

The Niobe Group in the Uffizi Gallery (see Byron's poem)

Apollo Belvidere, Vatican

Mercury (bronze by Bologna) in Florence

Perseus, by Canova, in the Vatican

Venus de Milo in the Louvre

Note: This list may be enlarged by reference to the classic myths in art, and inexpensive reproductions of most of these are available.

FESTIVALS OF MYTHOLOGICAL ORIGIN

Olympic games, in honor of Zeus, held every four years
Heraë, in honor of Hera, celebrated by Greek maidens every fifth year

Panathanæa, in honor of Pallas Athena, athletic contests

Pythian games, in honor of Apollo, celebrated every three years at Delphi

Artemisia, in honor of Diana, at Delphi

Demeter, the earth-mother, was honored with a yearly festival

Greater and Lesser Dionysia, feast of Dionysus, god of wine, held in spring and autumn

QUESTIONS TO TEST FAMILIARITY WITH MYTHS

What myth seeks to account for misery and disease in the world?

What myth explains the formation of desert places?

Which myth symbolizes the return of spring?

What was the Greek idea of the origin of music?

How did the martial qualities of Athena differ from those of Mars?

What was the gift of Prometheus to humanity?

Why is he called the first great teacher or savior?

What modern poems are founded on the story of Prometheus?

What deity personifies the law of compensation?

Which of the gods is thought to have symbolized wind?

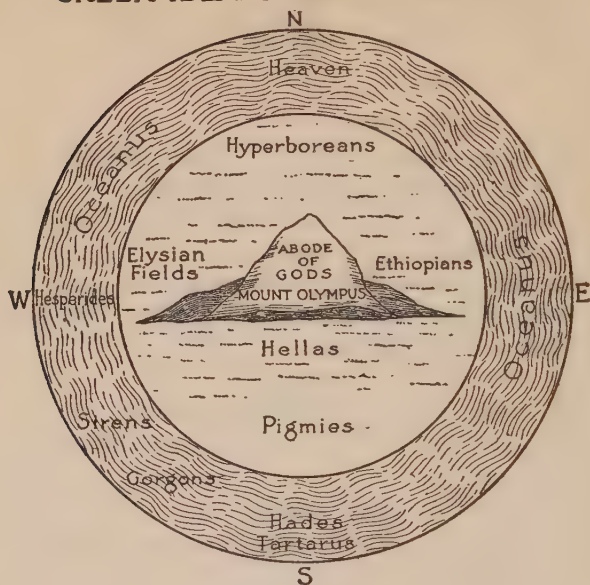
Which of the gods was lame?

Who were the oreads? The Gorgons? The Harpies?
The Fates? The Muses?

REFERENCES FOR FURTHER STUDY OF THE MYTHS AND THEIR
RELATION TO LITERATURE AND ART

- Age of Fable*, Bulfinch
Classic Myths, Gayley
The Myths of Greece and Rome, H. A. Guerber
An Introduction to Mythology, L. Spence
Early Chapters of the History of Greece, George Grote
Greek and Roman Mythology, Jessie M. Tatlock
Articles by Andrew Lang in *Encyclopædia Britannica*
Old Greek Folk Stories, Josephine Preston Peabody
The Iliad and the Odyssey
"Queen of the Air," Ruskin
"The Earthly Paradise," William Morris
Tanglewood Tales and Wonder Book, Hawthorne
Heroes, Kingsley
"Prometheus Unbound," Shelley
Poems of Mystery, Myth, and Romance, Madison Cawein
Delphian, Course, Vol. II
Tennyson's "Sea-Fairies," "Hesperides," "Demeter and Persephone," "Lotus-Eaters," etc.

GREEK IDEA OF THE UNIVERSE



The Greeks conceived of the universe as a hollow globe, with the earth, a flat circular disk, lying midway between Heaven and Hades. Exactly in the center of the universe was Hellas, with Mount Olympus, the home of the gods, towering above it. About the universe flowed the waters of Oceanus, and the dim twilight region outside the circle of earth was peopled with all sorts of mythical creatures. To the west lay the Elysian Fields, and still farther in this enchanted region the isles of the Hesperides.

THE FIRST EPISODE

ANCIENT CLASSICAL DRAMA

I

GREEK TRAGEDY: ÆSCHYLUS, SOPHOCLES, EURIPIDES

The dramatic literature of every modern language has come, at one time or another, directly or indirectly, under the influence of Greek tragedy.

—Brander Matthews in *Development of the Drama*.

ORIGIN OF THE GREEK TRAGEDY

THE birthplace of the drama was in religious worship. The ultimate origin of Greek tragedy may be found in the ballad-dance which celebrated the festival in worship of Dionysus, god of wine, and which paid homage to the creative force of nature. As far back as seven centuries before the birth of Christ the custom obtained of placing a goat upon an altar in the agora or market-place as a sacrifice to Dionysus; and since the god of wine was connected by myth with the satyrs, and with the gross Silenus, the latter figured largely in the extravagant dances and fantastic choruses. The custom was introduced into Athens from Thrace. These goat-men combined music and song and gesture in the wildest abandon, and wherever that combination is used, it is called a ballad-dance. The name "tragedy" means "goat-song," and the men of the chorus were called tragedians. The worship of the god, who was the patron of appetite and riotous living, lent the approval of religion to a "grand intemperance movement of ancient times." It celebrated the most impressive experience of men, that of the changing sea-

sons. As time passed there were three different festivals observed yearly: the Greater Dionysia, at the close of March when spring came back; the Lesser Dionysia, in December when the harvests were gathered; and the Lanæa, in January. It was at the Greater Dionysia that the Greek poets afterward contended for supremacy, and the prize was, according to tradition, a goat in the early days.

Little by little the dithyramb of the chorus took on lyric quality ending with a definite climax. Improvisation gave place to action, and we have the beginnings of a stage with the spectators in a circle about it. Contrary to the usual conception of things, the chorus was not an adjunct of the drama, but the drama was an adjunct of the chorus.

About 520 B. C. Thespis, the true creator of tragedy, whose name is forever linked to the dramatic spectacle, put on three tragedies at Athens, of which only a few fragments remain. Uniting the function of author and actor, he interpreted his own work. He also invented the use of make-up. Soon the market-place was abandoned for a natural amphitheater on a hillside, with the orchestra below and an altar in the center of the circle. To rest his chorus, Thespis recited at intervals, and thus the first actor was introduced. Æschylus introduced a second, and Sophocles a third. Tragedy became, under the predecessors of Æschylus, a sort of public institution, no longer a private enterprise, and competition, which so inspired the Greek games, was introduced into the making of the drama.

The Athenians believed it to be as much the province of the state to provide amusement as to supply baths and gymnasiums, and to attend was not only a privilege but a religious duty. Poets who wished to compete submitted their plays to the archon, and from these the three best were chosen and were given a chorus for production. Each competitor presented a series of three tragedies and a satyr-play. Three wealthy citizens were appointed each year by the state to defray the expense of the chorus, which was at first fifty, and later reduced to twelve. In the Greater Dionysia tragedy

soon became first, and the element of buffoonery was largely eliminated; at the Lesser Dionysia comedy reigned supreme. The satyric drama was a mixture of the grotesque and heroic, distinguished from tragedy by its extravagant gaiety and its happy ending. The lyre was used to accompany serious themes and the flute for lighter vein. "The Greeks, in their true tragedy," declares Samuel A. Eliot, Jr., "were absolutely harmonious: limpid, naïve, religious, and oftentimes cumulatively and unrelievedly terrific."

ÆSCHYLUS

To Æschylus belongs the honor of creating the first perfect drama. However much critics may disagree as to the respective merits of Æschylus and Sophocles, they are pretty well agreed that the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus is the most perfect example of classic drama that remains to us. The Greeks sometimes gave and sometimes withheld their favor in his lifetime but were quite ready after his death to bestow substantial rewards upon one who should produce his plays. Æschylus had acted in his own plays and trained his own choruses. He was forty years old before he won the coveted prize in the Greater Dionysia and had lived in a very stirring time of Greek history, taking part in the battle of Marathon. Has aristocratic sympathies often got him into trouble with his audiences.

The themes of early tragedy were not original but founded on well-known traditions; the more familiar the tradition the more the Greeks enjoyed the exposition. Æschylus used the "crumbs which fell from the table of Homer" in the making of his great trilogies, only one of which remains to us complete. When we recall the conditions under which the competitions in the Athenian theater were conducted we will understand why so many of the Greek tragedies are a part of the series of three with a connected theme. There were three tragedies and a comedy given by each poet on a single day, and in the time of Æschylus unity of theme was an

essential of such a trilogy. The Orestrian triple drama which recounts the woes of the House of Atreus consists of three distinct plays: *Agamemnon*, *The Libation-Bearers*, and *The Furies*. The lofty thought and majesty of movement place this at the head of the literary masterpieces of the ancient world. Seven tragedies in all remain to us, the other four being *The Persians*, *The Suppliants*, *Seven against Thebes*, and *Prometheus Bound*. The last holds an exceptional place in the literature of the world.

IMPORTANT COMMENT

No amount of reading about Greek tragedy and its great masters can compensate for a lack of knowledge of the plays themselves. Here, as in every period in the study of the drama, "the play's the thing." One may know when Æschylus was born and how he died, but if the great trilogy of the House of Atreus remains unread, if the heroic struggles of Prometheus as Æschylus conceived them have never stirred the emotions to their depths, then one knows nothing of Æschylus. The production of a play is the best possible sort of training in interpretation where that is possible. With Æschylus, individual reading and analysis of the great trilogy and the tale of Prometheus, with group discussion afterward and possibly group-reading of selected portions, seems the best method of approach.

STUDY OF Orestrian Trilogy

The thread which binds this triple drama into unity is the ancient idea that crime must be avenged, and that curses were transmitted from one generation to another. The inheritance of evil in this instance was the crime of Atreus in setting before his brother, Thyestes, the flesh of his own children and permitting him to eat in ignorance. For this vile act a bitter curse follows the House of Atreus. They are forced through a succession of horrors to shed kindred blood,

which was a great offense to the gods and caused the suffering of Orestes at the hands of the avenging Furies. The theme of the accursed family occurs over and over again in literature: we turn to the ill-fated house of Lear, to the House of Ravenswood with its dark past and tragic destiny, to the battlements of Macbeth where the raven croaked, to the Celtic House of Fionn and of Usna and to the gloom of the House of Usher. The entire trilogy should be read.

The *Agamemnon* is the longest and the greatest of the trilogy. It is sublime in its grandeur and gloom and in its characterization. Clytemnestra is a stronger embodiment of the woman who suppresses in herself all feminine weakness in gaining her end than Lady Macbeth. The prophetic frenzy of Cassandra, her attempts to warn the chorus and her final despair as she enters the house of doom combine to form one of the most dramatic scenes in ancient tragedy, created from the poet's fancy and not in the original myth. Clytemnestra determines to avenge the sacrifice of her daughter, Iphigenia, by Agamemnon, to secure a favorable wind for his fleet in the siege of Troy. By his act Agamemnon brought the first blood-guilt upon the House of Atreus after the curse; by her revenge Clytemnestra brought the second, and made inevitable the third. The strong fatalism of the Greeks speaks in the lines:

Some past impiety, some gray old crime,
Breeds the young curse, that wantons in our ill,
Early or late, when haps the appointed time—
And out of light brings power of darkness still,
A master-fiend, a foe, unseen, invincible.

From the beginning we are oppressed with the sense of coming doom.

The *Choephoroi* or *Libation-Bearers* is so called from the solemn procession carrying offerings to the tomb of Agamemnon. Orestes, son of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, returns to Argos to avenge the murder of his father. The obligation to avenge was one of the strongest motives of ancient tragedy.

This vengeance, by the will of the gods who are fulfilling the curse upon the House of Atreus, requires that he shall slay his own mother; and by that dread act he draws upon him the pursuit of the Furies, to whom the person committing such a crime is given over for punishment. Note the parallelism of theme in *Hamlet*. The third blood-guilt overshadows the House of Atreus. The beginning of the *Choephori* is a lyrical duet between Orestes and Electra addressing the ghost of their father. The Chorus supplements their tale of wrong with wail of coming woe:

Behold the storm of woe divine
That waves and beats on Atreus' line
 Its third great blast hath blown.
First was Thyestes' loathly woe—
The rueful feast of long ago,
 On children's flesh unknown.
And next the kingly chief's despite,
When he who led the Greeks to fight
 Was in the path hewn down.

And now the offspring of the race
Stands in the third, the saviour's place,
 To save—or to consume?
O whither, ere it be fulfilled,
Ere its fierce blast be hushed and stilled,
 Shall blow the wind of doom?

Although the plot of the *Eumenides* or *Furies* revolves about the deed of Orestes, it is really a conflict of gods and great world-principles to which the gods themselves give way. The decree that the man who shed his mother's blood should be turned over to the Furies was an established law of justice not easily to be evaded. The chorus plays a strong part in this play, and much use of the element of terror was made in their hideous masks, wild gestures and wilder words:

Hear the hymn of hell,
 O'er the victim sounding,—
Chant of frenzy, chant of ill,
 Sense and will confounding!

Round the soul entwining
Without lute or lyre—
Soul in madness pining,
Wasting as with fire!

We have in the conclusion the first of those trial scenes which afterward became very popular in dramatic presentation. Apollo calls for a council of Athenian citizens, who decide the fate of Orestes by ballot. The blood-guilt of the House of Atreus is finally cleansed. The entire trilogy abounds with lofty passages.

Know that a throne there is that may not pass away,
And one that sitteth on it—even Fear,
Searching with steadfast eyes man's inner soul:
Wisdom is child of pain, and born with many a tear.

Praise not, O man, the life beyond control,
Nor that which bows unto a tyrant's sway.
Know that the middle way
Is dearest unto God, and they thereon who wend,
They shall achieve the end.

THE STUDY OF *Prometheus Bound* (Read entire play)

In contrast to the trilogy, *Prometheus Bound* is without plot, the chorus is incidental, and the dialogue and soliloquy all important. That there is a power in the universe which even the gods may not overcome, seems to be the thesis of Æschylus in this play. Prometheus, prostrate, apparently at the mercy of his enemy, by his prophetic power foresees the ultimate deliverance and in proud patience bides his time. It is the power of destiny back of the acknowledged Ruler of Men. Humanity in revolt against the tyranny of a superior force has been a favorite theme of all time. There are bits of suggestion in Prometheus of the heroic plaint of Job. Æschylus was a bit of a radical in his age when he pictured Zeus, the all-wise and all-just, as a ruthless tyrant, the enemy of mankind, punishing their benefactor who

sought to civilize and teach them. There is more than a suggestion, too, of the way of sacrifice of the world's great teachers and saviors.

As the scene opens, the rule of Æschylus of two actors upon the stage at once seems to be violated by three presences until we note that the figure of Prometheus is a huge effigy, and that there are not at the same time three speaking characters.

Prometheus is one of the heroic figures of the world, suffering but undaunted; powerless but unconquered still. Compare him with the Satan and Samson Agonistes of Milton.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

What did Æschylus contribute to the drama?

How many characters did he use?

What was the function of the chorus in *Agamemnon*?

Was Æschylus an orthodox theologian of his day?

What drama most emphasizes anomalies in morals and myths?

Why does the story of Prometheus foreshadow the doctrine of vicarious atonement?

Compare Prometheus with the Hebrew hero, Job.

Compare him with Milton's Satan and Samson Agonistes.

Which dramas have the theme of bondage to ancestral guilt?

Contrast Clytemnestra with Lady Macbeth.

Contrast Orestes with Hamlet.

What is the dramatic purpose of Cassandra's prophecy in *Agamemnon*?

SUPREMACY OF SOPHOCLES

Great as was the popularity of Æschylus with the Athenians, he was to be eclipsed in his lifetime. Sophocles won his first victory over Æschylus, when but twenty-eight years of age, with his first presented dramas. For sixty years the

new favorite wrote and produced, winning in that period eighteen victories in the Athenian theater in the greater contests and several of the lesser. He is reputed to have written one hundred twenty-three plays. He took little part in politics and was of an amiable disposition. He took the drama at the hands of Æschylus and built upon it, making no startling innovations. His greatest change was the introduction of the third actor. He reduced the chorus from fifteen to twelve and further emphasized the dramatic action. He broke away from the unity of theme in the trilogy, so carefully observed by Æschylus, and made each play complete in thought. More important than any of the material changes Sophocles made, from the standpoint of later development, were the changes in the spirit of the tragedy. The gods no longer sat aloof in majesty, pronouncing judgment upon mortals, but partook of human qualities; their problems and the conflict of great moral forces no longer were paramount; the concerns of men became more often the central theme. A very long step toward realism was taken when Sophocles dared to introduce humble characters upon the stage. He was a master of diction and won the title of the Honey-Bee because of the beauty of his lines.

Seven complete dramas remain; *Œdipus the King*, *Œdipus at Colonus*, *Electra*, *Ajax*, and *Antigone* are the most famous.

Goethe said of Sophocles's plays, "His characters all possess the gift of eloquence, and know how to explain the motives for their actions so convincingly that the hearer is almost always on the side of the last speaker."

Although tragic in theme and full of the fatalism of the Greeks, the work of Sophocles has greater serenity than in that of Æschylus.

STUDY OF *Œdipus the King*

(Read entire play)

Œdipus the King is pronounced the masterpiece of Attic tragedy by Professor Brander Matthews. It follows a plot

of primitive simplicity yet presents increasing intensity of emotion leading up to the final catastrophe. Although it depicts parricide, incest, and murder, the feeling which it awakens is pity rather than condemnation for the unfortunate hero caught in the meshes of destiny and by his own struggles bringing upon him the final tragedy. An oracle has declared that Œdipus will murder his father and marry his mother. To make this impossible the babe is cast out. The very precautions taken to prevent the calamity make it possible for him to return to his native country in ignorance of his birth, encounter and slay his father, and marry his mother. Because the audience is in possession of the secret, it is a constant illustration of the irony of fate. The determination of Œdipus to discover the secret which he would have been better off not to know, the setting of his will in conflict with those about him, hasten the dire calamity. It is an illustration of the belief of the Greeks in an iron fatality from which it is impossible to escape. The wonder is that these joyous, beauty-loving people should have been so overshadowed by the gloom of fatalism.

Ye men of Thebes, behold this Œdipus,
Who knew the famous riddle and was noblest,
Who envied no one's fortune and success.
And lo! in what a sea of direst woe
He now is plunged. From hence the lesson draw,
To reckon no man happy till ye see
The closing day; until he pass the bourn
Which severs life from death, unscathed by woe.

STUDY OF *Antigone* (Read entire play)

The *Antigone* is the work of Sophocles's maturity and is a good example to study in relation to the progress from his own early efforts and the work of Æschylus. We must bear in mind that after the trilogy ceased to limit poets they felt

no compulsion to treat a character as it had been formerly treated either by themselves or another. We find discrepancies of event and entirely different handling of theme. The character of Antigone should be studied by itself in this particular tragedy and not with reference to other works. In Æschylus the characters were ever subordinated to great moral forces; in *Antigone* everything is subordinated to the character of the heroine. The conflict has become that of human will; Antigone faces death for an idea. Although she is daughter to Œdipus, the theme in no way goes back to the ancestral curse. The determination of Antigone to cover her brother's body against the command of Creon is the theme of the play. To understand her anguish one must know that the Greeks believed that without the rites of burial the soul could not enter the realms of rest but must wander until the body was finally covered with dust. The introduction of a touch of comedy in the watchman reminds us of the good use to which English drama later put the homely humor of clowns and servants. The death of Antigone and Hæmon has in it much of the pathos of the ill-starred *Romeo and Juliet*. The Chorus is cold and out of sympathy with the heroine. It closes with the moral platitude:

Man's highest blessedness;
In wisdom chiefly stands;
And in the things that touch upon the gods,
'Tis best in word and deed
To shun unholy pride;
Great words of boasting bring great punishments;
And so to gray-haired age
Comes wisdom at the last.

EURIPIDES

Euripides, the third master of Greek tragedy, won third place when he first presented his tragedies and five times won the highest honors. He was contemporary with Sophocles and was obliged to compete with that great artist in produc-

tion. He was a quiet, studious man, fond of philosophy, and friend of Socrates and Pythagoras. He possessed the most complete library of his day and enjoyed a long life and a reasonable measure of popularity. One of his best plays, *The Bacchæ*, was produced when he was past seventy.

His plays are more melodramatic; they are lacking in that simplicity and sincerity, that inevitableness, which characterize truly great tragedy. Tragedy was already breaking down and something distinctly modern creeping in; the age of faith had passed but virtue was still extolled because it was beautiful. Euripides was the first realist. The degree to which he used women and children in his plays was a scandal in his day.

This third Greek master introduced the formal prologue, still further violated the sacred unities, and enlarged the device of carrying on the story by the messenger. The device known afterward as *deus ex machina* was contrived by Euripides. He was very fond of philosophy and permitted his characters to pause in the midst of the action for long discussion upon abstract subjects; for this he was held up to ridicule by Aristophanes. Euripides had little respect for the mission of the chorus but used it as a means of bringing in his lyrics, which are exquisitely beautiful, as the following lines from *The Bacchæ* will testify:

What else is Wisdom? What of man's endeavour
Or God's high grace, so lovely and so great?
To stand from fear set free, to breathe and wait;
To hold a hand uplifted over Hate;
And shall not Loveliness be loved for ever?

Of the ninety-two plays which are credited to Euripides, the most famous are *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *The Suppliants*, *Andromache*, *Electra*, *Ion*, and *The Bacchæ*. The plays of Euripides were produced for six hundred years after his death, in distant lands. He was poet, mystic, and philosopher, but more than all else a successful playwright.

STUDY OF *Medea*

(Read entire play)

The *Medea* might be termed a failure in Euripides's own day, since it won third place only in the Athenian contest, but it has been very largely praised and imitated by the Romans and many modern dramatists. The theme is the jealous passion of Medea and her crimes to avenge her wrongs, finally culminating in the slaying of her own children as a revenge on their father. A beautiful eulogy of Athens is the best part of the chorus, which is quite unconvincing throughout the play. Violent and unnatural passion is displayed by the heroine, who is the forerunner of a long list of wronged heroines with a doubtful past in modern drama and fiction. The theme has been played upon again and again in drama and opera. The guilty thoughts of Medea, at first with no clear purpose, rise and culminate in more guilty deeds; but the poet makes it plain that it is the result of wrong and selfishness in others. Jason is a weakling for whom we have little sympathy. Euripides has been called a woman-hater, but if he gave us Medea he also gave us Alcestis, the incomparable wife and mother. For the story of Medea in modern form see *The Life and Death of Jason*, by William Morris.

STUDY OF *Alcestis*

(Read entire play)

Alcestis is the noblest picture of wife and mother in Greek tragedy, sacrificing her life to avert the ancient doom from her husband, after both father and mother had refused. Modern audiences have little sympathy with the husband who could permit such a deed, but with the Athenians it was very popular. The main thought was the deliverance of the king, and the sacrifice was taken quite as a matter of course by the audiences of Euripides. It gave no offense to Apollo, since he chose the home of Admetus as his earthly habitation

and praises the king as a "holy man." The beauty of hospitality is the central thought of the play. The chorus embodies the story in a single passage:

When to avert his doom,
His mother in the earth refused to lie;
Nor would his ancient father die
To save his son from an untimely tomb;
Though the hand of time had spread
Hoar hairs on each aged head:
In youth's fresh bloom, in beauty's radiant glow,
The darksome way thou daredst to go,
And for thy youthful lord's to give thy life.

Not with self-pity or repining did Alcestis meet her dread fate. She arrayed herself in brave attire and treated as a triumph the day of her sacrifice. For modern treatment see "Love of Alcestis" in William Morris's *Earthly Paradise* and the "Golden Legend" of Longfellow.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

What was the contribution of Sophocles to Greek tragedy?

Discuss his use of the third actor.

His attitude toward the chorus, unities, and sacred trilogy.

What was his attitude toward the gods?

In what way does *Ædipus* illustrate Greek fatalism?

What is the motive of *Antigone*?

What immortal lovers do Hæmon and Antigone foreshadow?

Why is Euripides the first realist?

Why do we conclude he was fond of philosophy?

Name some modern heroines of the type of Medea.

Who is the noblest woman of Attic tragedy?

Compare the treatment of Electra by the three poets.

Who contrived the device known as the god out of the machine?

RÉSUMÉ OF GREEK DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAMA

There are certain terms frequently encountered in the study of modern drama which must be understood with reference to their use in Greek Tragedy.

THE THREE UNITIES

What do we mean by the three unities? The unity of Greek tragedy is much more strict than that of any other period. It expressed the famous principle known as the three unities:

1. Unity of Action. This means simply that there must be oneness of theme throughout. The play must not carry a secondary plot as the work of Shakespeare so often does. Everything revolves about the central figure; moreover his story is told from a single point of view, that of the chorus.

2. Unity of Place. Those incidents are selected for acting which may be brought into a single place. When it becomes necessary to the progress of the story to recount former events, the chorus is used. When distant events are described, we have the device of the messenger.

3. Unity of Time. The whole tragedy presents one continuous scene. There is no break in time.

THE FUNCTION OF THE CHORUS

Chorus The chorus was the bond which made unity possible. It remained in the orchestra during the interval between episodes and made the audience acquainted, through its choral odes, with many things essential to the progress of the story but impossible to depict without violation of the unities. It was the bond between the lyric and dramatic elements; it was the confidant of the hero and the instructor of the audience, corresponding to the modern mobs, crowds, and soliloquy; it ever impressed the lesson the drama sought to teach.

Greek drama was not a spectacle merely but a religious observance. It satisfied the service of the god and at the same time gave opportunity for the poet to press his ideas of life and government. When the chorus ceased to tell the story and took, instead, its cue from the tragedy, drama began.

DRAMATIC MOTIVES OF GREEK TRAGEDY

Drama arises from the struggle of human will, the idea of conflict. When the will contends with forces that may not be overcome—as the decree of the gods, in the case of *Prometheus*, or pursuing fate in *Ædipus*, or the more modern instance of unfortunate heredity, as in Ibsen's *Ghosts*—the exposition is of necessity a tragedy. When the theme is built about the obstinacy of contending human wills, neither of which is inevitably superior, or about circumstance which may be surmounted, the result cannot be tragedy in its true sense and is the basis of comedy.

There were certain motive forces which carried the incidents of Greek tragedy and were very generally used by the great dramatic poets:

1. *Destiny*. An abstract Force which pervades the universe, above the gods themselves—the Inevitable, the Irresistible. Note *Prometheus*. Behind the unjust decree of Zeus, the Inexorable bides its time. In course of development *Destiny* becomes *Providence*, and *Fate* becomes *Fortune*. Moulton defines this atmosphere of fatalism, under which the Greeks lived, as “moral sanction” or “moral retribution.”

2. *Use of the Supernatural*. The use of oracles from the gods to direct action was very common; so also was that of seers, soothsayers, omens, and dreams.

3. *Interest of Horror*. Terrors of unseen world: ghosts and Furies. Unspeakable crimes or situations: banquets of human flesh, incest, matricide. While murder was not depicted on the stage the details were related to the audience with great relish, and the body was often wheeled forward for display after the deed.

STRUCTURAL PARTS OF GREEK TRAGEDY

1. The Prologue. Explanatory introductory speech.
2. The Parode. Speech of chorus preceding episode, frequently an ode.
3. Episode. Dramatic scene, episodes and interludes alternated.
4. Choral Interludes. Intervals when chorus carried on action alone.
5. Exode. Final action following last choral interlude.

NUMBER OF ACTORS

At first tragedy was limited to a single actor; Æschylus introduced a second, and Sophocles a third. They were called in order of their appearance protagonist, deuteragonist, and tritagonist. It must be borne in mind that this number refers to speaking characters upon the stage at the same time and not to the number of persons in the drama. The same actor could take different parts, and any number of mutes might be on the stage.

THE DIONYSIAN THEATER

The Greeks knew nothing of our modern "fourth-wall" or "picture-frame" settings. The theater was open to the sky and large enough for the entire population. Permanent sets of stone were used ultimately, presenting the front of a temple or palace. In front of this was the narrow elevated stage, and, below, a circular space for the orchestra with an altar of Dionysus in the center. Revolving platforms with movable scenes were used later, with a sort of pulley-arrangement by which gods and watchmen could be swung out from above. Actors depended upon the "tragic buskin," a thick-soled boot, for majesty of appearance and upon masks for change of parts. Realism was not sought, either in appearance of actors or delivery; lyrics were sung and blank verse was declaimed in a stilted artificial tone. Some one has likened

the action to "animated statuary" with its combined poetry of sound, motion, and words. It is interesting in this connection to note the Greek Theater at Berkeley, California, and the plays given there.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

What is meant by the Greek unities?

What were the chief dramatic motives of Greek tragedy?

What was the place of destiny in ancient drama?

Contrast Maeterlinck's treatment of destiny in *The Betrothal*.

Mention some modern plays making use of the supernatural.

Name some modern plays in which the element of horror is predominant.

Describe the Dionysian theater.

What do you know of the Greek Theater of Berkeley and its plays?

What play of Shakespeare emphasizes the element of horror?

Why are actors sometimes called Thespians?

What was the function of the chorus in Greek tragedy?

What is the conflict most often used by the Greeks?

What is the struggle in most of Ibsen's plays?

II

GREEK COMEDY: ARISTOPHANES, PHILEMON, MENANDER

A friendly familiarity with an author of cosmopolitan fame can be achieved only by wide wanderings to and fro, here and there, in the long centuries in search of the predecessors whom he followed, the contemporaries to whom he address his message, and the successors who followed the path he had been first to tread.

—*Gateways of Literature*, Brander Matthews.

ORIGIN OF GREEK COMEDY

GREEK comedy also had its inception in the satyr songs and dances of the festival of Dionysus. While tragedy moved farther and farther away from the old burlesque, comedy retained and incorporated much of the early boisterous play. The Greek comedies supplied entertainment; they also afforded excellent opportunity to show up pet theories and follies of public men in biting satire. Current happenings in the political and literary world were the themes; and in spite of the caustic thrusts, the frequently coarse humor, and the personalities, many a wholesome truth came to Athenian audiences by way of the comedies presented at the Lenaian contests.

When taken over by the state, comedy was far less developed and crystallized than tragedy had been. It lacked unity and was loosely put together. We may distinguish three periods in its development: Old Comedy, Transition Period, and New Comedy. Old Greek Comedy was the outcome of democracy, of a free state; sure of their independence, the citizens could afford to laugh at themselves; but with increasing oppression and weakness they grew sensitive, and all sorts of restraints were imposed upon comedy. In the mid-

dle period it became unlawful to use names of living persons, and the chorus was done away with. Through the chorus most of the mockery and raillery had taken place. Comedy lost its lyric quality and was couched more and more in the language of the day. Types rather than individuals were treated; the apothecary, the soldier, and the parasite. The experience of the unfortunate author who was thrown into the sea by Alcibiades did not tend to encourage satire of public life. The New Comedy is distinguished by its portrayal of contemporary manners and love intrigue, themes which dominate also our modern production. Certain distinctions were religiously observed in choice of subject: one might ridicule the gods, but not deny them; he might display all sorts of vulgarity, but the serious exposition of an unworthy motive, such as love of money, met with frank disapproval. Athenian citizens claimed the privilege of expressing disapprobation by thumping on the stone benches with the heels of their sandals. Æschylus nearly lost his life once in the Athenian theater when he was suspected of revealing some of the sacred mysteries.

Tradition says that comedies were enacted at the Lenaia from the middle of the fifth century, but details prior to Aristophanes are very few. Aristophanes represents the Old Attic Comedy, and its later development reached its height under Menander and Philemon. Menander's greatest achievement was the creation of a form from which the comedy of character later grew under Roman influence. Philemon often defeated Menander in the contests; his contribution was the introduction of love intrigue. Masks were still used. In the early days they presented distorted likenesses of the real characters mentioned; later they became types. A pale mask indicated a love-sick swain; a bronzed face, a hero; a torn ear and long matted hair, a soldier. The parasite and cook were familiar types of Middle Comedy, and eating and drinking a great part of the scene.

Since so little remains to us of the work of Menander and

Philemon—but the merest fragments of their many comedies—the study of Greek comedy may be illustrated by the careful reading and discussion of the work of Aristophanes.

ARISTOPHANES

Aristophanes is the product of a peculiar time and environment, never repeated in the development of nations; he had no rivals among his predecessors and no successors. Originator of his art, he could have no great predecessors; with his methods regulated and forbidden, he could have no imitators. He stands alone.

Aristophanes mocked everything, the commendable and evil alike; he even attacked the accredited divinities of his country. To take away the hope of a people without offering anything in its place is a work of destruction which finds a close parallel in our modernists. For this, Victor Hugo declares the great poet to be the only evil and disastrous genius that ever existed. We have gone far in experiment since Victor Hugo; he might modify that statement with our modern basis of comparison.

Whatever his influence upon Athenian audiences may have been, Aristophanes certainly possessed great excellence in several directions. He had a very beautiful lyrical imagination, of which the following call to the nightingale from *The Birds* is an instance:

Up from thy slumbers, mate of mine:
Let forth the flood of strains divine,
As when, the wonder of thy throat,
Thou trillest Sorrow's bubbling note,
For Itys wailed with many a tear
By thee and me. The warbling clear
Forth of the yew-trees close-leaved tresses
Issues and mounting upward presses
To Jove's own seats; when golden-haired
Apollo hears. To answer dared,
His ivory-fashioned lyre he takes,
And such soul-touching chords awakes,

That, as the melody advances,
 The gods move forward to their dances;
 And lips immortal deign to borrow
 And sing with thee
 In harmony
 'A marvelous sweet song of sorrow.'

He had a remarkable use of the shafts of satire. He loved to play up the peculiarities of Socrates and Euripides. The former is the subject of *Clouds*, and from the many gibes of Euripides the following passage from *The Beggar's Suit* is characteristic:

Dear Euripides,
 If you had but a suit of rags that you could lend me!
 You're he that brings out cripples in your tragedies,
 Ain't ye? You're the new poet, he that writes
 Those characters of beggars and blind people?
 Well, dear Euripides, if you could but lend me
 A suit of tatters from a cast-off tragedy!

He had the serious reflection of an independent thinker and the playful love of fun which characterized the childhood of the world. All this combined to form his peculiar style, a sort of lyrical burlesque.

STUDY OF The Frogs (Read entire play)

This comedy is an excellent example of the brilliancy of Aristophanes and his peculiar mingling of lyrical beauty with coarse wit. It is also very interesting to the student from the standpoint of literary criticism, containing pictures of the great tragic poets, Æschylus and Euripides. Dionysus, patron of the theater, deplores that there is no good dramatist left on earth and goes on a perilous journey to Hades in search of Euripides. His disguise and byplay with his servant reminds one of the mix-ups of masters and servants so frequently used by Shakespeare. Charon probably added a touch of humor by transporting the incognito god

in a rude framework which he carried on his shoulders and pretended to paddle. The chorus of frogs croaks as they paddle laboriously away. The chorus of Hades impersonates votaries of Bacchus. Dionysus finds Æschylus and Euripides, and there follows a trial of their theories and skill. The lines are weighed by scales; Æschylus wins after much disputation. The following passage is from the calling forth of Iacchus by the chorus:

O Iacchus! power excelling, here in stately temples dwelling,
O Iacchus! O Iacchus!
Come to tread this verdant level,
Come to dance in mystic revel,
Come whilst round thy forehead hurtles
Many a wreath of fruitful myrtles,
Come with wild and saucy paces
Mingling in our joyous dance,
Pure and holy, which embraces all the charms of all the Graces,
When the mystic choirs advance.

This lyric praise of the chorus moves with all the stateliness and beauty of a modern sacred hymn.

THE FIRST FEMINIST

In the *Lysistrata* of Aristophanes we have a theme which is extremely modern. To-day we have the womanhood of the world organizing against war, and the theme of *Lysistrata* is exactly the same. The women of Greece agree to refuse all wifely duties to their husbands until peace is proclaimed. They seize the Acropolis to prevent the treasure of the Parthenon from being applied to war purposes. A chorus of old men who attack with fire, and a chorus of old women who attempt a defense with pitchers of water, and their mutual compliments, furnish a comic situation.

The following year, in *The Women at the Mysteries*, the feminine problem again appears with less seriousness of treatment. It is but a farce, full of gibes against Euripides and coarse ribald jests.

In *The Parliament of Women* the Athenian women meet in the assembly, wear their husbands' clothes, and decide upon the future management of the state. They approve community of goods, of husbands, and of everything. Praxagora, the leader in the scheme, persuades her husband with much coarse humor to acquiesce in her scheme. It is too absurd to be a genuine satire upon Athenian women. Athenian audiences doubtless rejoiced in the contention of sex as displayed in the chorus from the *Lysistrata*:

Forth to the fray, dear sisters, bold allies,
O egg-and-seed and potherb market girls,
O garlic-selling, barmaid-baking girls,
Charge to the rescue, smack and whack them well!

DECADENCE OF GREEK DRAMATIC EXPRESSION

The fourth century marked the decadence of Greek tragedy. The new plays of this period were lacking in strength and originality, and after the close of the century the creation of tragedy ceased at Athens. The position of actors, on the contrary, rose as creative force declined, and the fourth century found them well rewarded and the trusted friends of statesmen. Since suitable plays were not forthcoming, they reproduced the classics and often took liberties with the lines until this was forbidden by law. They were in good repute and developed great pride of profession.

Although comedy came into its own later than tragedy, it held its sway over Athens longer; in the third century there was still no lack of competitors at the *Lanaia*. With the second century, performances became less frequent, and by the close they were exceptional. After this date all trace of competition is lost.

Roughly speaking, then, the drama was born from a religious festival of the Greeks in the sixth century B. C.; rose to its supreme height under the great masters of tragedy in the fifth century; raised acting to the dignity of a great profession in the fourth; developed comedy of character and

then sank to rest; lay dormant, gathering energy for its next wondrous impulse, which touched, almost simultaneously, the shores of England and Spain. The great days of Greece were over; her new tragic art flourished for a time on a foreign soil and then sank to a sleep of fifteen centuries, but the spirit of it was a lovely and deathless thing as we shall see in our survey of later movements.

The Greek spirit means the love of all that is fine in humanity; it means the worship of beauty, so simple and unadorned as to become almost austere; it means sheer truth and the dignity of a human soul helpless against the decrees of fate.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

What was the origin of Greek comedy?

What was the mission of the Old Attic Comedy?

Contrast this with the service of modern journalism.

State the distinctive characteristics of Aristophanes.

What caused satire of political and public life to decline?

What is the origin of our modern romantic comedy?

Who introduced the love intrigue into comedy?

Which creator of comedies was most imitated by Romans?

What resemblance is there to Shakespeare in *The Frogs*?

Which one of Aristophanes's comedies deals with the philosophy of Socrates?

Discuss the use of the chorus and of the mask in comedy.

Compare the lyrics of the great Greek poets.

GREEK PLAYS WHICH MAY BE PRODUCED BY AMATEURS

The *Antigone*—Sophocles. Arranged by E. Fogarty.

Eleven characters and chorus.

One setting, not difficult.

Published by Baker.

Lysistrata—Aristophanes. Published by French.

Modern theme of feminism.

Five men, four women, and chorus.

Alkestis—Euripides. Published by Baker.

Nine characters and chorus.

Medea—Euripides. Adapted for outdoor production.

Requires good acting.

Four men, two women, two children.

Published by French.

Polyxena, from the *Hecuba* of Euripides, adapted by Samuel A. Eliot, Jr.

Little Theater Classics, Vol. I.

Three women, three men, chorus of twelve women.

REFERENCES FOR DETAILED STUDY OF GREEK DRAMA

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Dramatic Poets, McHaffey (Macmillan Company).

Development of the Drama, Brander Matthews (Charles Scribner's Sons).

The Theater, Hastings (Duckworth and Co., London).

Nine Greek Classic Dramas, *Harvard Classics*, Vol. VIII (Colliers).

Delphian Course, Vol. III and VII, Delphian Society.

Outline of Literature, Vol. I, John Drinkwater (G. P. Putnam's Sons).

Coleridge's translation of Sophocles and Euripides (Macmillan Company).

Translation of Æschylus, Plumptre (Routledge).

Translation of Aristophanes, Frere (Routledge).

Introduction to Little Theater Classics, Vol. I (Little, Brown and Co.).

Translations of the Greek dramas may be found in *Everyman's Library*.

Euripides and His Influence, F. L. Lucas (Marshall Jones Co.).

The Poetics of Aristotle, Lane Cooper, in the series, *Our Debt to Greece and Rome*, edited by Hadzits and Robinson (Marshall Jones Co.).

III

ROMAN INFLUENCE: SENECA, PLAUTUS, TERENCE

ROMAN INFLUENCE UPON THE DRAMA

THAT there was a native Italian comedy is very certain, but it was arrested in development into literary form by the adoption of Greek models. No traces of the native comedy remain; the crude plays which pleased the people were probably not literally transcribed. We find, then, that we need not pause with the theaters of Rome for detailed study, since they were adapters of existing Greek forms rather than creators of anything original. They not only took over the plots of the new Attic Comedy, of Philemon and Menander, but they left the setting in Athens and were content with a thin wash of local color.

There were several reasons for the indifference of the Roman people to the great impulse of dramatic expression: they were accustomed to the bloody spectacles of the arena, and mere play-acting became very tame in comparison; their actors were slaves and of the very lowest class, and this from the first gave the profession a bad reputation with the cultured classes; their audiences were drawn from the vulgar and unlearned, and their playwrights were forced to write down to their level; moreover, they were content while conquering the Greeks politically to be conquered by them intellectually.

They accepted the Greek theater with certain modifications. They remodeled their circus with its central arena to the Greek form but used the place of the orchestra as a sort of reserved section for senators. They elevated the stage to the top of the dressing-house. They added a curtain and an

awning to protect the audience from the sun. Great extravagance was displayed in the building of the later theaters. One such would hold an audience of eighty thousand and boasted three thousand magnificent statues. Columns of marble, glass, and gilded wood were used, and the air was refreshed by sprinkling wine, water, and crocus-juice in the passages. But all this magnificence did not produce a great dramatic expression. With the dawn of Christianity play-acting fell into strong disrepute, and the Roman stage sank to its lowest depths. Women were forbidden to attend the theaters in the first century of the Christian era.

THE GREEK INFLUX

The Greek language was known in Rome earlier, but it was not used extensively until after the third century, B. C. The first tragedy given in a Roman theater was a translation from the Greek by Livius Andronicus. He trained his own actors, seeking them among the slaves, and substituted the lyric monody for the chorus. Parts were sung and others were spoken as in our modern comic opera. Ennius particularly translated the works of Euripides, and in his extreme modesty compared himself to Homer. Terence acknowledges his indebtedness to Ennius. In all, from Livius Andronicus to the reign of Augustus, there were not more than thirty-six playwrights, and the tragedies numbered about one hundred and fifty. The tragedies of Seneca are the only ones that remain to us. While they were written more for style than dramatic effect, they continued to be produced as late as the fifth century A. D.

PLAUTUS AND TERENCE

Comedy held a more important place in the Roman theater than tragedy, and two names are to be especially remembered in connection with its development: Plautus, who modeled his plays on those of Philemon, and made popular the New

Attic Comedy in Rome; and Terence, who built upon the foundations of Menander. Plautus left twenty plays which were produced as late as the second century A. D. Terence was drowned on a visit to Greece at the early age of twenty-six. He left six plays, remarkable for their correctness and elegance. Those who desire to study a play of this period are recommended to *The Captives* of Plautus, unique in having no female characters.

DECADENCE OF THE ROMAN DRAMA

The little comedies known as mimes, which were popular among the Romans as early as the third century B. C., took the center of the stage in the first century of the Christian era, and, together with their offspring, the pantomimes, rivaled the gladiatorial combats and the chariot-races in public esteem. Drama, never a distinct national expression, disappeared. The church had a great deal to do with this decline of the drama; it disliked the pagan origin of the art and was determined in its disapproval.

Briefly, the story of Roman dramatic expression is this. Tragedy was introduced from Greece in the third century B. C., and it retained its native form and character. There were more than one hundred tragedies produced, but the only ones remaining to us to-day are those by Seneca, tutor to Nero. Comedy existed from the fourth century B. C. It began with the little comedies called mimes, rose to its height with the work of Plautus and Terence, and by the close of the second century B. C. was practically dead. Productions were made as late as the second century A. D., but the creative impetus was over. The impulse was, at best, a borrowed one; it was not born of great national need for expression, and it never produced that exaltation of spirit which the stark beauty of the Greek tragedy had done; it was imitative, rather than creative, and quite cheerfully gave way to the vulgar and immoral pantomimes which seized the fancy of Rome and spread to the remotest provinces.

TWO PLAYS OF THE PERIOD

Phormio, a comedy by Terence (Samuel French).

The Twins, by Plautus (Samuel French).

THE MIME

From the third century B. C. until as late as the ninth century A. D. the *mimus* or mime was popular with Roman audiences. The mime was a little comedy written in prose; the words were secondary to the gesture and pose. Masks were not used.

THE PANTOMIME

The pantomime grew out of the mime. Words were discarded, and the action was indicated entirely by gesture. Books containing the story, written in Greek, were distributed to the audience. Masks were used once more, and women took part. The pantomimes grew shockingly immoral. Actual debauchery and torture were depicted.

It is not hard to trace a resemblance to the pantomime at its best in our modern moving picture, where so much of the story is carried by facial expression and gesture.

The Mask and Wig Club of Chicago has recently made two interesting revivals of pantomimes to large audiences: *The Seven Gifts*, by Stuart Walker; and *The Whirlwind*, a Polish folk-tale.

ROMAN FESTIVALS WHICH FEATURED DRAMATIC PERFORMANCES

The Roman games

The Plebeian Games

Games of Apollo

Megalesian Games

Floral Games of the Republic

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Why did the Romans produce no great national drama?
- How did the Romans alter the Greek theaters?
- What was the status of the acting profession?
- Contrast this with the position of Greek actors.
- Which Roman playwright used the methods of Philemon?
- From whom did Terence draw his plots?
- What tragic master did Seneca translate and follow?
- What was the attitude of the Church toward drama?
- What was the mime?
- How did it differ from the pantomime?

IV

HEBREW DRAMATIC EXPRESSION: AUTHORS UNDETERMINED

What epos could more truly gather into itself the most sacred ideal of such a nation than this story of Job, the man in whom was wrought the supreme test of what it is to be upright, who on his ash-heap, a veritable Hebrew Prometheus, continued honest with himself, true to what he saw in the world, loyal to what his soul told him was divine, until the storm was past and his foe shrank baffled away?

—Genung, *The Epic of the Inner Life*.

HEBREW literature did not develop a distinct drama, but the dramatic impulse permeated its other literary forms to such an extent that it created a dramatic expression which will compare favorably with that of other races.

As we have seen in the study of the Greek tragedy, the origin of literary expression is to be found in the ballad-dance, a combination of music, song, and imitative gesture. Out of this primitive expression came the sister arts of poetry, dancing, and the drama. In the early scriptures we have descriptions of the ancient Hebrew ballad-dances. The songs of Moses and Miriam, accompanied by the timbrel and dancing, were true ballad-dances. When David danced with all his might before the ark and composed his lofty psalms, to the disgust of his dignified wife, it was a ballad-dance.

ODE AND CHORUS, STROPHE AND ANTISTROPHE

We have seen in the Greek orchestra that the odes were performed by singers who advanced to the right from the altar with a stanza, and returned with the answering stanza to their starting-point. Then they took the same number of steps to the left and returned. The first stanza of a pair

was called a strophe and the answer the antistrophe. The rhythm of the antistrophe reproduced that of the strophe line by line. There are many examples of this metrical arrangement in the Hebrew lyrics. A familiar example may be found in the Book of Proverbs, IV, 18-19, where the way of the just and the way of the wicked is contrasted in a father's admonishment to his son. Many of the psalms may be arranged in strophe and antistrophe without violating their meaning in any way.

Dramatic monologues are found in the Hebrew wisdom literature, and the fervent recitals of the Hebrew prophets frequently break into dramatic rhapsody. Lacking a theater to express their emotions, the dramatic impulse breaks out in their songs of worship, as they pause to act out in an impassioned passage the story of past wrongs; it creeps into the didactic sermons of their wise men, who picture with eloquent gesture the pitfalls laid by the wicked to ensnare the righteous man; it rises to sublime heights in the dramatized philosophical discourse of Job. We can but suspect the wealth of dramatic material in Hebrew literature from the fragments that remain to us after the careful elimination and selection of centuries, seeking theological content with little regard to preservation of form or beauty of diction.

THE DRAMA OF JOB

Prometheus, chained to his rock by an unjust decree, utters his sublime defiance to the gods; Job in sackcloth, with ashes upon his bowed head, still declares his innocence and questions the justice of Jehovah; Dante in his anguished search utters the plaint of the inarticulate Middle Ages; Faust struggles through error and failure to consciousness of the All-Good he seeks: these are the dramatic figures of the ages, because they embody the eternal and universal struggle of the finite toward the infinite.

“Invention or fact, the man Job is one of the guiding figures of the ages, a world's hero; whose words, the record of

a great conflict and victory, we cannot afford to leave cloistered among the learned few."

DATE AND AUTHORSHIP

It is quite certain that the Book of Job was written during the last five centuries before Christ. It probably embodies a much older story. Of the author we know nothing, but his identity does not matter in the light of self-revelation which his genius has left us. His is the first voice in the Scriptures before the Christ to adjust rightly Divine Providence to human experience and oppose reason to religious dogma. The author of Job may have been contemporary with Æschylus; certainly he preceded the Roman playwrights, but because the Roman was but a succession of the Greek they are taken up in sequence. From Babylonian inscriptions comes the record of a similar hero, but Job is strictly Hebraic in treatment and belongs to their wisdom literature. Whoever the writer may have been, he had suffered and questioned, and his words still reach every suffering, questioning soul after more than twenty centuries have passed.

LITERARY STRUCTURE

Professor Genung prefers to call the Book of Job an epic poem, since it is founded upon an older legend or saga, glorifying the life of a world-hero in his spiritual adventure. He terms it an Epic of the Inner Life. But the dramatic movement is very apparent, and it is more frequently classed as drama, although epic and lyric qualities are plainly present.

The essential idea of the drama, as we learned in its beginning with Greek tragedy, is conflict. To have struggle there must be one force which contends and another which resists. What is the conflict in the drama of Job? Job, the protagonist in this great struggle of the soul, is pitted with all his puny but defiant strength against none other

than Jehovah himself, from whose decree he suffers, and whose justice he questions. The Adversary, who goes about upon the earth, searching the souls of men to sift them, is but an instrument of Jehovah, of whose intervention Job is utterly unaware. The real conflict is between man and God. Or, to put it in other words, it is the eternal question of the soul seeking the purpose of its creation.

Examining the poem first for dramatic structure we find it is divided into the following parts:

THE PROLOGUE: (CHAPTERS I AND II)

This has four short scenes setting forth with great rapidity the entire background of the plot and introducing the contending characters. Two are set on earth and two in heaven. It is written in impassioned prose with occasional rhythmic passages and the familiar recurrence of thought called parallelism. The sons of Job upon earth are shown in an ideal picture of Oriental family life, and the sons of God in heaven are shown in happy activity promoting the welfare of the universe. We behold Job, an upright man, greatly prospered and blessed, yet not unmindful of the things of the spirit; and we behold Jehovah rejoicing in his integrity.

In the second scene the Adversary questions Job's service to God with cunning insinuation:

"Doth Job fear God for naught?"

"Take away his prosperity and he will renounce
Thee to Thy face."

And Jehovah consents to the trial.

In the third scene we find Job "under the shadow of God's hand." With swift dramatic effect, the four messengers announce his utter desolation. This use of the messenger is very like that of Greek tragedy. But Job sinned not; rending his mantle he cried:

“Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave and the Lord taketh away: Blessed be the name of the Lord.”

How many white lips since the day of Job have found no better words than his to voice their submission to the will of God!

But Satan, in the fourth scene, has another card to play. Job has not suffered physically. “Touch his body with loathsome disease and he will curse Thee.” And Jehovah consents. Job becomes an outcast, sitting in sackcloth upon the ash-heap outside the city gates, and his wife, her patience gone, becomes a temptation to him, bidding him curse God and die.

We are now, through this prologue, carried into the heart of the plot. We have seen an innocent man lose his all at the suggestion of a cynical doubter; we have seen an all-powerful God consenting to this. The question now becomes, how shall God be vindicated before his faithful servant? No more daring theme can be imagined than this arraignment of Divine Justice before the bar of man; daring in any day, but how much more so in the dim centuries of dogmatic thought when it was conceived! The device so often used in Greek tragedy of letting the audience share the author’s secret in the prologue is evident here. The readers are made aware that the purpose of Jehovah in permitting the afflictions of Job is but to prove his worth; Job’s ignorance of this, like the ignorance of Orestes, makes the rest of the drama possible.

The reader will be repaid, before turning to the dramatic dialogue, by giving attention to the character of the Adversary and comparing him with the Satanic figures of other literature. He is not the colossal Lucifer of Milton nor the arch-fiend of Goethe. He seems rather the personification of the little doubts and suspicions which go up and down, admiring virtue with reservations and pessimistic sneer. Such an Adversary was not peculiar to Job’s day.

THE DRAMATIC DIALOGUE

The place is an ash-heap outside the city gates. We are not to conclude that Job was literally thrown upon this pile of refuse, but miserable outcasts sought the elevation for the cool air. Probably several months have elapsed since the dread malady fastened itself upon Job, for the friends have heard of the event, prepared for a journey, and traveled several hundred miles across the desert upon camels. Added, then, to the grief and affliction has been the terror of time, the recurring days of burning sun with their crawling hours and the chill nights with their pitiless stars.

Beside the leper on the ash-heap and his unseen opponent, the persons of the dialogue are three friends of the Eastern patriarch who have often partaken of his hospitality and have come to condole with him. There is a fourth speaker, apparently present all the time, but unnoted by the author until the three friends have finished their discourse. He was evidently not so closely associated with Job.

Note the characterization of these three friends, quite distinct in personality, although all are exponents of rabbinical lore, anxious to fit their creed to the case in hand.

The following bit from *Mark Rutherford* gives another view of Job's pious friends who have become proverbial in no pleasant sense: "Who that knows what most modern consolation is can prevent a prayer that Job's comforters may be his? They do not call upon him for an hour and invent excuses for the departure which they so anxiously await; they do not write notes to him, and go about their business as if nothing had happened; they do not afflict upon him meaningless commonplaces." And Dr. Nicoll adds, "Let those mock at Job's comforters who will, who have travelled two hundred miles over the burning sand to visit a man in disaster and sat with him seven days and nights in generous silence." The drama proper is opened with this tense seven days and nights of silence, with four figures sitting with bowed heads and rent mantles.

FIRST CYCLE OF SPEECHES (CHAPTERS III-XIV)

The silence is broken by Job's despairing cry. He has felt the silent accusation of these dreadful days and can bear no more. He craves the utter oblivion of rest. The plaint of Job is one of the finest lyrical passages of the book, falling naturally into three strophes. It has been called, very aptly, the "elegy of a broken heart." It is a cry from the depths of human despair. The friends, ignorant of Jehovah's purpose, holding that suffering is a judgment upon sin, proceed to convict Job of error.

Eliphaz, cultured and suave, is the acknowledged spokesman for the group and opens the discourse. He is a fluent speaker, rather vague in his conclusions, but quite evidently sincere and kindly intentioned.

Bildad, the second speaker, does not rely, like Eliphaz, upon his own experience but falls back upon the traditions of the fathers.

Inquire I pray thee, of the bygone age,
And attend to the research of their fathers.
For we are of yesterday and know nothing.

Bildad is the type of conservative tradition.

Zophar is a blunt and dictatorial person, who holds all wrong who fail to agree with him, and grows heated in argument. He is a typical religious bigot.

But Job is obstinate. He will not admit sin in his life in any measure commensurate with his disaster. They are blinding themselves to the real truth in the effort to make a "case" for Jehovah.

On behalf of God will ye speak wrong?
And for Him will ye speak deceit?
Will ye be partisans for Him?
Or for God will ye contend?

To Bildad's wealth of tradition he replies:

Your remembrances are proverbs of ashes,
Your defences are defences of dust.

Opinionated Zophar stings him to sarcasm:

No doubt but ye are the people
And wisdom shall die with you.

SECOND CYCLE OF SPEECHES (CHAPTERS XV-XXI)

The first colloquy ends without any reconciliation of theology to the fact. The friends are growing angry with Job for seeking to justify himself. God punishes evil-doers; Job is punished; therefore Job is an evil-doer, or God is unjust, which is unthinkable. They ignore the fact and become special pleaders for God, while Job in his loneliness and disappointment as desperately clings to his forlorn hope of vindication.

In the second cycle of discourse there is no softening or yielding on either side. Under the cover of generalizations, Job is pictured, again and again, as an evil-doer who has drawn divine retribution upon himself. Like many another leader of religious revolt, he sees his defenses fall away and finds himself utterly alone. He is aware of doubts no other will admit; the mental isolation of it is far worse than his physical anguish. He realizes that he can expect no help from without. Nothing can come from further discussion. He must evoke from within the Divine Idea which men have lost. He cries for a "daysman"—one to stand between him and this dread God whom he cannot approach. And then, out of the blackness of despair, Job rises to the heights of prophetic vision:

Oh that my words were written!
Oh that they were inscribed in a book!
That with iron pen and with lead,
They were graven in the rock forever!
I know that my Redeemer liveth;

That he will stand survivor over the dust;
 And after my skin is gone, they will rend this body,
 And I, from my flesh, shall see God;
 Whom I shall see, I, for myself;
 Whom mine eyes shall behold, a stranger no more.

Job has had his supreme moment; from this point the passion has spent itself. The climax is greater than even he realizes and is utterly lost upon the friends, who resume their cut-and-dried arguments quite as if they had not listened to the most astounding prophetic revelation, one whose fulfilment would shake their theology to its foundations.

THIRD CYCLE OF SPEECHES (CHAPTERS XXII-XXXI)

With the second colloquy the debate is practically ended. Some critic has said that the third seems to serve the purpose of deepening the suspense and withholding the moment of Jehovah's avowal. It is opened as usual by Eliphaz, and now he charges Job with definite sins of commission and omission. In rebuttal Job reviews his life of service, "when the friendship of God was over his tent."

I made the widow's heart sing for joy.
 I was eyes to the blind,
 And feet to the lame was I;
 A father was I to the needy.
 I dwelt as a king in the multitude—
 As one that comforteth mourners.

And contrasts it with his present misery:

Night pierceth out my bones away from me;
 And my gnawing pains lie not down to rest.
 He hath cast me in the mire.

And yet this epic hero draws near unto God "like a prince." Baffled but not beaten, he draws his mantle over his face and declares, "The words of Job are ended."

Chapter XXXI is called the "oath of clearing."

A CHORAL INTERLUDE (CHAPTER XXVIII)

Within the second cycle of speeches is the mysterious chapter which has baffled literary critics. It contains the famous "quest of wisdom" chant and is one of the most lofty passages in the world's poetry. It is quite evidently an interpolation of the poet's own remarks rather than the speech of Job. It may have been intended as a choral interlude.

THE INTERVENTION OF ELIHU (CHAPTERS XXXII-XXXVIII)

Zophar has offered his last taunt with the statement that Job has probably received less than he deserves and may expect worse things to befall him for his impiety. He does not speak the third time; and a fourth person, who has evidently been present all the time but has received no attention from any one, takes up the argument. He is young and impetuous; he represents the newest thought of his day and rushes into the fray with all the self-confidence of youth.

I will utter knowledge, even I.

He tells the older men what they should have said to Job. As he draws near the end of his discourse he refers to the approaching storm—the rumbling thunder, glassy sky, and oppressive stillness and heat. His words grow more confused as the aspects of heaven become more awful. Neither Elihu nor the three friends have any desire to argue with Jehovah in person. Only presumptuous Job has declared:

Oh that I might find Him!

Might come even unto His dwelling-place!

I would set in order my cause before Him.

And to Job alone the Voice from the Whirlwind addresses itself. It brushes Elihu aside contemptuously:

Who is this that darkeneth counsel

With words—but without knowledge?

We can fancy the four advocates of Jehovah groveling upon their faces in the dust while Job is bidden "to gird up his loins and be strong."

JEHOVAH ANSWERS JOB (CHAPTERS XXXVIII-XXXIX)

Job is shown the majesty, power, and knowledge of God. His vision is enlarged, and he sees himself a tiny atom in all this wondrous scheme, unable to comprehend its full import.

Behold I am too small, I cannot answer Thee!

The soul-shaking power of the presence of God is sufficient to awaken in the purest human soul the conviction of utter unworthiness:

I have uttered things too wonderful for me—
I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear,
And now mine eye seeth Thee;
Wherefore I loathe me, and repent
In dust and ashes.

But, after chastening, love and trust are born; and Job, reinstated in the love of God, does the thing which the initiated soul always does: he turns in love toward men. He prays for his friends, and in his prayer he is made clean. Divine intervention was the only possible ending for the drama, unless, indeed, it had closed after the fashion of some modern plays, when the words of Job were ended, leaving the whole question unsolved—the indeterminate ending so often employed to-day. In that case it would have lost its spiritual significance. It is interesting to note that this supernatural intervention was introduced by Euripides into Greek Tragedy and called *deus ex machina*.

THE EPILOGUE

In the epilogue Job's friends are reproved and his material blessings restored twofold. This bit of realism was quite

natural to a Hebrew poet, and quite necessary to the type of mind represented by Job's friends; but the modern mind wonders whether other children could make Job forget the ones who had perished. The outer prosperity is but a symbol of that strength of soul which had been developed by his suffering and reunion with God.

SUMMARY

Job is the first great drama of religious revolt. Its theme was not new in the days of Job, nor is it old to-day. Its problem is that of a sincere soul facing the mystery of evil and going out in its search for truth in "dim and perilous ways." It sounds the depths of Sheol and soars to the habitation of the Most High. To be sure the problem is not solved in the exposition, but insincerity is rebuked and honest research justified and a new faith established in the process.

In this drama strength contends with weakness; hope alternates with despair; the range is from heaven to hell, from the depths of anguish to heights of prophecy. The same theme permeates more modern literature. Prototypes of Job are found in *Faust*, in Shelley's *Prometheus*, in the *Rabbi Ben Ezra* and *Melon-Seller* of Robert Browning. The soul that is bruised and baffled, but not beaten, turns to God himself for justification. There is an echo of the heroic plaint of Job in the rallying-cry of William Vaughn Moody:

Of wounds and sore defeat
I made my battle stay;
Of loss, and doubt and dread
I made a helmet for my head.
From shutting mist of death
And failure of the breath,
I made a battle-horn—
The triumph clear, the silver scorn!

The experience was for Job alone. Four others witnessed the dénouement, but only one was transfigured by it. Four

went up into the mountain to pray, but only Jesus walked with Moses and Elias there. Twelve went into Gethsemane, but only one was awake through the hours of more than mortal agony. Each soul faces, alone, its apocalypse; spiritual truth cannot be imparted, it must be lived.

In looking for the message of the drama, we cannot do better than to accept the brief statement offered by Professor Genung in his valuable study of the Book of Job:

There is a service of God which is not work for reward: it is a heart-loyalty, a hunger after God's presence, which survives loss and chastisement; which in spite of contradictory seeming cleaves to what is Godlike as the needle to the pole; and which reaches up out of the darkness of this life to the light and love beyond.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY

It is difficult to approach a book so full of religious import with a clear vision of its literary character. The play should be read through at a single sitting, as if never seen before, not pausing for critical comment, but noting the dramatic movement as a whole. For this purpose the free translation of the *Modern Reader's Bible* by Moulton or that of Genung in *The Epic of the Inner Life* is recommended. After the first cursory reading the portions should be studied in detail, using the notes of some good commentary. Only after each member has conscientiously done this preliminary study will lecture or group-discussion prove most valuable.

SUGGESTED REFERENCES

The book of Job, *Modern Reader's Bible*, Moulton (Macmillan Co.).

The Epic of the Inner Life, John F. Genung (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Compare the form of Job with that of Platonic dialogues.

How does the Adversary compare with Milton's Lucifer?

With the Mephistopheles of Goethe?

Is the Adversary an enemy of man or an instrument of God?

Is he a fit leader of the modern hosts of pessimism?

What is the place of Job's wife in the drama?

What is the purpose of the seven days and nights of silence?

Characterize the three "friends."

Has the world been a bit severe on Job's comforters?

Was the argument of the friends the whole truth?

What is the climax of the drama?

Compare Job with Prometheus.

Compare the Voice from the Whirlwind with Euripides *deus ex machina*.

Does the author solve the problem presented?

Is there a suggestion of the complacent and conventional "happy ending" in the epilogue?

Where should the play have ended to satisfy many a modern playwright?

Select three striking lyrical passages from the book.

Find a chant, an ode, a choral interlude.

Is the problem of Job as fresh to-day as in his own time?

Name some modern dramas of protest.

Note: A dramatization of the Book of Job, divided into the prologue, the Curse, the Debate, the Interposition of Elihu, the Voice of the Lord, and the Epilogue, with directions for staging and costuming, is published by the Stratford Co. (75 cents).

The recent production by Stuart Walker has demonstrated the possibility of this dramatic poem.

THE CHORAL INTERLUDE

MEDIEVAL MYSTERIES AND MIRACLES

DRAMATIC EXPRESSION OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Feeble linguists, uncertain melodists, dull versifiers, toiled over these tattered play-books, whose inherent drama was no one man's invention, no one nation's achievement, but the life-pulse of mediæval Christendom.

—Katharine Lee Bates in *English Religious Drama*.

The cuckoo theater lays its eggs in the nests of other birds: on Greek altars, in Christian chapels, in the innyards of England and the tennis-courts of France.

—Kenneth Macgowan in *Continental Stagecraft*.

FOLLOWING the analogy set forth in the introduction, of a unity corresponding to that of the Greek tragedy in the development of the drama itself, the first episode is now over; the actors have made their exits, and the stage is left to the chorus, which must bridge over for us the long interval before the stirring scenes of the next episode. We may fancy the leader of the chorus reminding the audience of the glory of the past and its lasting achievements in the surviving works of the Greek masters, of the revivals of the Roman imitators, and of the influence of the spiritual conflict of the Hebrews; we may fancy his challenge to his chorus to picture anything approaching this past glory in the present, or any prophecy of future splendor. We can imagine the reply, bewailing, in a magnificent ode, the opposition of the church and the death of the ancient art; then in triumphant finale the prophecy of the resurrection by this same church of the heroic form it had laid low. The story which the chorus must tell us may loiter over details or pass swiftly over dormant periods, but briefly it must run something after this fashion:

Drama was undeniably dead, and the church had been the judge that pronounced the fatal decree. Not that the church would have been able to enforce the death-sentence so swiftly if the theater had been firmly intrenched in the affections of the people. Drama had long been afflicted with various ills which alienated the popular esteem and made it an easy victim of religious zeal. The attention of the multitude, moreover, was attracted at the moment by the gladiatorial combats and chariot-racing of the Hippodrome, and the execution of a half-forgotten pastime received scant notice.

The wonder is that so deathless a thing should have lain in the tomb so long. For ten long centuries we hear no more of playwrights or of plays. To be sure, little comedies were probably still enacted in rustic Italy, and wandering minstrels and acrobats enlivened the long feasts, but the Greek and Latin classics were limited to the libraries of the learned; they were no longer acted.

When at last the drama rose from its long sleep, it was the church, which had assisted in its execution, that brought about its resurrection.

The same religious fervor which sent men by the thousands to die in defense of the Holy Sepulcher, which dotted Europe with cathedrals and frescoed their walls with Madonnas and saints, revived the despised art of acting, to create within the ignorant, uncultured masses a new enthusiasm for Holy Writ. The services of the church were in the Latin tongue, and devout priests sought some graphic method of driving home the Bible stories; and what more natural than to act out certain passages? The new drama in no sense evolved from the ancient art, but like it arose from an act of religious worship. It was an adjunct of the church, where it was nurtured; it outgrew its parent and went out for itself, but it never lost its religious significance.

PASSION PLAYS

The first rude dramas of the church were observances of certain holy days, such as Christmas and Easter. At Christ-

mas the scene of the Nativity was shown, much as it is to-day in many of our modern churches; on Good Friday the cross was laid away and brought out again on Easter Sunday. Gradually other events of the life of Christ were added, with a station in the chancel for each; when these were finally linked together into a complete cycle we have the Christian mystery. All unwittingly the medieval church had seized upon the great dramatic theme of the ages—the life and passion, the death and resurrection, of Jesus, who was the Christ—the unending conflict of spirit with material forces.

In the summer of 1922 was repeated the most remarkable survival of the passion play in the world. It is believed that the villagers of Oberammergau had their cycle of miracles as early as the twelfth century, but as it is known to-day the spectacle dates back to the year 1633, when under terror of the plague a solemn vow was made to perform the Passion Play once every ten years if the dread malady was stayed. In 1870 the Christ “came down from the cross” to take part in the Franco-Prussian War, and on account of the recent World War the performance of the vow was postponed two years. This is a legitimate survival of the medieval passion play.

Not with the same deep religious motive, Martha Candler tells us in *Drama in Religious Service*, but with remarkable success, the American Passion Play has been produced for several seasons at Hollywood, California. This spectacle grew out of the conviction that the life of Christ contains the most vivid dramatic material ever written and out of the desire to present that material in a new light to the world.

Those who are interested in comparative drama will delight in the adaptation of *The Martyrdom of Ali*, by Samuel Eliot, Jr. (*Little Theater Classics*). This passion play of the Persians, founded on the story of the Prophet Mohammed and his son-in-law, Ali, is strangely like the medieval drama of England.

More and more the churches are using some form of the old Christian mystery to celebrate the Nativity. At Pom-

fret, Connecticut, a communal celebration of the Nativity has been an annual event for ten years. For three years in succession, the Drama League of Colorado Springs, has put on a Passion Pageant or Christmas Mystery. At Easter time, in a church in the heart of the theater district, New York, a mystery from one of the medieval cycles was produced very effectively.

THE DRAMA IS CROWDED OUT OF THE CHURCH

Finally this cuckoo which had been hatched in the church outgrew the nest and was pushed out into the churchyard, where it continued to grow until nothing but the public square would house it; but the mystery was still an act of worship, a pious deed. Cities often gave a mystery to celebrate their deliverance from some threatened calamity, which is the motive of the Passion Play still enacted every ten years at Oberammergau.

By 1300, the clergy were limited to certain subjects, and after 1603 the celebration of the mysteries was forbidden in the churches. We may readily find the reason for such prohibition in the facility with which these religious dramas became corrupted. A familiar instance is found in the Feast of the Star, which was the procession of shepherds and Wise Men to the manger, where they were shown the Child in the beginning. By what means the beautiful Feast of the Star became transformed into the riotous Feast of Fools which was observed at Epiphany in many churches is uncertain. On that day a Bishop or Pope of Fools was elected; he entered the church and amid the wildest buffoonery conducted a service. In the thirteenth century the desecration was forbidden, but traces of it lingered for many years.

THE GUILDS TAKE OVER RELIGIOUS DRAMA

The great cycles required much executive effort and much money in their production. The burden became too great for the church or the unorganized community, and so they were

turned over to the various guilds, each of which became responsible for a certain feature, and they vied with each other in splendor of presentation. In France, the stations were arranged in a row along which the audience moved, but in England the changing events were depicted by means of movable platforms, similar to our modern float, called in that day pageants. The first wagon moved into place, gave its feature, and passed on; while a second followed closely. One might secure an advantageous position and watch the mystery throughout a summer's day. Four complete cycles have come down to us of the English mysteries: those of York, Chester, Wakefield, and Coventry.

1. THE MYSTERY

The mystery was the complete cycle of events from the Scriptures. The spoken mysteries came into popularity in the fifteenth century. They were given with great splendor in the provinces of France; the spoken mysteries of Paris were produced by a particular cult or group, called the Brothers of the Passion. In England we have many characteristic glimpses of contemporary life. All the parts were taken by men, and there were certain types that could be depended upon to set the audience into roars of merriment: such were the characters of Satan, Herod, Pilate, and Noah's wife, who was a typical shrew and refused to leave her boon companions and enter the ark. When she is finally carried in, struggling and kicking, she gives Noah a sound cuff on the ear.¹

There were three elevations of the platform in France; in the highest sat God, in his gilded wig, in paradise; the second represented earth with its changing action; the lowest hell-mouth with its dreadful munching jaws. To devise a particularly new and dreadful hell-mouth was a great achievement; so also was a new and particularly hideous torture for

¹ From Chester Pageant of the Flood.

Judas. In England the wagon or pageant contained two platforms.

Very long cycles are mentioned. One at Bourges, France, in the sixteenth century, celebrated the Acts of the Apostles and lasted forty days. In England a single day was usually given to the production of a mystery. The spectacle grew in size and elaboration; finally from two to five hundred people in costly robes were required, and then the trade-guilds protested and begged to be relieved of the burden of financing further efforts.

2. THE MIRACLE

While the terms "mystery" and "miracle-play" were often used interchangeably by writers upon medieval drama, by "mystery" is usually meant a cycle of the life and passion of Christ. The Nativity Pageant is still referred to as a Christmas mystery. The Resurrection Pageant is an Easter mystery. The miracle-cycles often included other subjects dealing in many instances with the whole course of events from the Creation to Doomsday. Thus a mystery, such as the Nativity, would be a part of the great miracle-cycle.

The oldest preserved English miracle-play is *The Harrowing of Hell*, dating from the early part of the fourteenth century. On the festival of Corpus Christi the trades-guilds of York presented fifty-seven plays depicting events from the creation of man to the coming of Christ, and through the Crucifixion to the Judgment.

Some items from a church-warden's account for one of these cyclic plays sound curiously to our ears to-day:

Link for setting the world on fire—

Pair of new hose and mending of old hose for white souls—

Paid for nine and one-half yards buckram for souls' coats—

Starch to make a storm—

God's gloves and mending God's head—

Crude as were some of the devices of the medieval miracle, and coarse as was some of the by-play, there were touches of great tenderness, as in this lullaby of the mothers in *The Massacre of the Innocents*.

O sisters two, how may we do,
 For to preserve this day,
 This poor yongling, for whom we do singe
 By by, lully, lullay.
 Lully, lulla, yow littell tine childe,
 By by, lully, lullay, yow littell tine childe,
 By by, lully, lullay.

Individual reading and group-discussion of the second English miracle, *Abraham and Isaac*, is recommended. This is a play of great beauty when artistically produced. Mr. Sam Hume put on a notable production in the Arts and Crafts Theater of Detroit and later at the Art Institute of St. Paul. The text which he used, together with full directions for staging, is found in Volume II of the *Little Theater Classics*. It is adapted from the Chester cycle and the Book of Brome and was originally produced by the barbers and wax-chandlers of Chester.

3. THE MORALITY

These are allegories in which the various vices and virtues are personified. In 1684 we have the following dramatic criticism translated from d'Aubignac:

One of the chiefest, and indeed the most indispensable Rule of Drammatick Poems, is, that in them Virtues ought always to be rewarded or at least commended, in spite of all the Injuries of Fortune; and that likewise Vices be always punished, or at least detested with Horrour, though they triumph upon the stage for a time.

It is a far cry from d'Aubignac to our modern critics. The first regular morality in English is *The Castle of Perseverance*, and *Everyman* was written before 1831.

Everyman is especially interesting because of its recent

revival. It has become familiar to American audiences through the productions of the Ben Greet Players and the work of Edith Wynne Matheson and Charles Rann Kennedy. Churches and clubs have also produced it successfully. In 1921 the drama returned to the mother-church in Europe when Max Reinhardt, the famous director, put on *Everyman* in the courtyard of the Cathedral of Salzburg.

There is an interesting morality entitled *Everywoman* in the English style which clubs have produced. A Henry Savage production is now appearing on the moving-picture screen.

Individual reading of *Everyman* as a type of the English morality is suggested.

STUDY OF *Everyman*

The strife of the good and evil forces of the universe to gain ascendancy over the soul in its earthly pilgrimage is the theme of the morality. In one of the remaining manuscripts Mankind sets out his own plight very clearly :

My name is Mankynde: I have my composycyon
Of a body and a soull, of condysyon contrarye:
Betwyx the teyn ys a grett dyvisyon;
He that shulde be sojecte now he hath the victory.

Everyman, called by grim Death to his long home, finds his prayers and tears of no avail. Go he must. The only concession which he can obtain from the grim messenger is that he may take his friends with him if they will go voluntarily. Fellowship has often shared his merry life, and so Fellowship is first invited but flies in terror from this new adventure. Kindred has a lame toe and cannot undertake the journey. Gold openly refuses without the courtesy of an excuse. There is Good Deeds, gentle and loving, but she is unable to rise because Everyman's sins have overwhelmed her. After due penance, through the intervention of Knowledge and Confession, Good Deeds is freed and goes with

Everyman to the churchyard and the open grave. This part has been made familiar through the interpretation of Edith Wynne Matheson in the modern revival.

This moral men may have in mind;
Ye hearers, take it of worth, old and young,
And forsake Pride, for he deceiveth you in the end,
And remember Beauty, Five-Wits, Strength, and Discretion,
They all at the last do Everyman forsake,
Save his Good-Deeds, there doth he take.
But beware, and they be small
Before God he hath no help at all.
None excuse may be there for Everyman.

4. LITTLE COMEDIES OR FARCES

The farther the drama got away from the church, the more liberties were taken with it. Realism came in to the point of vulgarity. It strikes a modern reader with a sense of irreverence to witness the blending of the medieval farce and the religious drama, but it did not offend the audience of that day. Comic scenes, wholly irrelevant to the theme, were introduced at will, and often a theme of lofty dignity would be preceded by a farce, gross to our modern ear. *Cain's Servant*, of the English miracle, is a familiar instance of interpolated comedy. One of the most amusing bits of medieval comedy is from the French, *The Tub*, with its story of a domineering wife, a henpecked husband, and an officious mother-in-law. The best surviving comedy is the French farce, entitled *Patelin*, by an unknown author.

Recommended for reading and group discussion: Patelin, from the Little Theater Classics.

5. THE INTERLUDE

The interludes were space-fillers and may be compared to our modern vaudeville sketches. They must be short; they must be full of humour. They were intended for a limited audience and indoor production with not more than four or

five actors. Among English interludes, those of John Heywood, Court Poet of Henry VIII, are best known and most readable.

Illustration: The Four P's, or the Merry Play Between Johan, the Husband; Tyb, His Wife; and Sir John, the Priest.

6. COMMEDIA DELL' ARTE (The Comedy of Art)

This had its origin in Italy. It is improvised or unwritten comedy. The author and manager chose the subject, laid out the skeleton of the plot, instructed his actors in their entrances and exits, and left the rest to Providence. The actors required quick wits and a great deal of imagination, and many must have been the blunders of the novice. The Italian *Commedia dell' arte* is interesting to us because its plots of intrigue were so frequently used by Molière later; it is interesting to us also because women appeared for the first time there; there also was the first use of a curtain. In the comedy of art, then, we may look for the origin of our "picture-frame stage," our fourth wall, so long limiting production, which some of our modernists have been trying to abolish in every possible manner. Since the comedy of art was never written, the study of an illustration is impossible.

7. MASQUES

The masques were also introduced into England from Italy, where they were put on with great splendor of music, poetry, and dancing. In England they date from the middle of the sixteenth century and influenced later drama. They were used to celebrate some event, such as the election of a mayor, the visit of a celebrity, or a wedding-festival. Read of the entertainment given at the castle of the Earl of Leicester in honor of Queen Elizabeth in *Kenilworth* for the description of a masque of that day.

Read, or better produce, the beautiful Masque of Comus by

John Milton, adapted for outdoor production and published by Baker. See *Modern Masques*, of Constance D'Arcy Mackay (Henry Holt & Co.).

8. PAGEANTS

These were allegorical spectacles in the form of processions to celebrate events. An example may still be seen in the procession of the lord mayor of London. This form attracted some of the best writers and was kept up until the end of the reign of Elizabeth. It is interesting to us because of the recent interest in the historical pageant in America. The International Pageant of Peace in Washington in 1919 was strikingly reminiscent of the medieval presentations. Sacred processions or pageants are still observed in parts of Italy, Switzerland, Spain, and especially in Central America and in Mexico.

SUMMARY

While the chorus has been recounting patiently the development of medieval drama and its differentiation into the various forms, we may imagine the audience shifting about and watching for the entrance of the actors, stifling a yawn behind polite fingers. But the patient chorus, bridging by a slender thread the lapse of fifteen centuries, must first be allowed to make its résumé.

The medieval drama differed but little in the various countries; in them all it prepared the way for a national theater by creating a taste for play-going, and by evolving from the inn-yards of England and the tennis-courts of France a rude working-model from which the first theaters grew. While it left no great piece of literature of a dramatic nature, it developed a colossal theme through carefully selected events to a triumphant finale; it emphasized the basic idea of conflict in the strife between God and Satan, with the final overthrow of the Adversary in *The Harrowing of Hell* and *The Judgment*; it introduced the relief of comedy into the

heart-rending tragedy of its theme; it reflected, in such portions as the Abraham and Isaac story, a sympathetic picture of family life; it depicted English life and manners, with striking realism and sublime indifference to the historic setting, in an Oriental story; it accustomed its audience to scenes of great emotional stress which made them tolerant of the bloodshed and horror of Elizabethan tragedy; it held up the mirror to life in such characterizations as *Noah's Wife* and the three shepherds; and it satisfied the requirement of Aristotle that the dramatic spectacle must purify the minds of its audience by means of pity and of terror.

Says Katharine Lee Bates, in *English Religious Drama*:

It was all so very real in these centuries of faith and art and passion. There was no old school and no new school of Old Testament criticism, with wordy debate of myth and scribe and epoch. Noah's ark was as genuine a craft to the fourteenth century as the *Pinto* is to us, and Eve's apple far more certain than Wilhelm Tell's. It was the semblance of the very God they saw in the child clinging to Mary's neck, in the boy questioning the white-bearded Rabbis, in the youth baptized by John in Jordan, in the patient sufferer wounded for their transgressions and bruised for their iniquities.

The tiresome moralities, with their pious platitudes, added to the theology of the Middle Ages some of the fruits of Christian experience, the pilgrimage of mankind through a perilous world, and contributed to Elizabethan drama the character of Vice in his motley who afterward became the court jester and the fool of Shakespeare.

But the chorus must, after giving us the constructive service of the medieval miracles and moralities, turn in all justice to the other side of the story. To quote again from Miss Bate's very satisfying conclusion:

None of the products of the Middle Ages had sinned more grievously against spirituality than the Miracle Plays, with their God in a gilt peruke and their Christ in red slippers, their insistence upon the physical agonies of Gethsemane and Calvary, their palpable Immaculate Conceptions and Resurrections. The Reformation, hungering and thirsting after the Divine, could not brook the triviality, the

grossness, the falseness of the old religious stage. It swept the land clear of it. It destroyed records and manuscripts,—all with the same headstrong vehemence, the same impetuosity of indignation with which it tore down the long-worshipped images of the Virgin, rifled the shrines of saints, scraped away frescoes, and mutilated carvings, and crushed into myriad fragments the enchanted windows, which not all the wizardry of modern art and science can replace. The Miracle Plays but went the way of all who have served their time, who have done with much of evil more of good, and whose mission is ended.

While the Middle Ages left no great piece of dramatic literature, literature was enriched during the medieval period by two great epics, the English *Beowulf* and the Spanish *Cid*; and *The Divine Comedy*, which notwithstanding its title was not a play at all, translated the religious impulses of that chaotic time into rhythmic heart-beats. What Michelangelo was to sculpture, what Raphael was to painting, Dante was to literature in its time of darkness; and this, I fancy, is the note with which our weary chorus will choose to close its long recital.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

What part did the church play in the death and resurrection of the drama?

Why did the religious drama leave the shelter of the church?

Describe the process by which the great miracle-cycles grew.

What was the original significance of the word "pageant"?

Describe some modern pageants that partake of medieval characteristics.

What was the original significance of "passion play"?

Name and describe some modern survivals.

Is there a distinct movement "back to the church" in our modern day?

Where did *commedia dell' arte* flourish?

Who was the greatest writer of interludes?

What form of medieval play celebrated Queen Elizabeth's visit to Kenilworth?

When and where did we get our "picture-frame" or fourth wall?

When did women first appear as actors?

Would you call *Midsummer Night's Dream* a masque?

Discuss carefully the contribution of the Middle Ages to the development of the drama.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY OF THE MEDIEVAL DRAMA

This long period, with its prosy moralities, offers some difficulties to the student who wishes merely to bridge over with understanding the history of dramatic development. To take up long and technical works upon the various cycles will scarcely be possible or profitable. The résumé in this text is intended to give the necessary salient points. For more detail such a work as that of Katharine Lee Bates on *English Religious Drama* will be most helpful, or, as an aid in interpretation and production, the recent book on *Drama in Religious Service* by Martha Candler. Supplemented by the historical data in the collections of plays, this will prove quite adequate. Therefore no extended bibliography is given under the medieval period.

Here, as elsewhere, the reading of representative plays in their entirety is the important thing. From the list below at least one example of each form should be read by every member of the study group.

READING REFERENCES

English Religious Drama, Katharine Lee Bates (Macmillan Co.).

Drama in Religious Service, Martha Candler (Century Co.).

Representative English Plays, Tatlock and Martin (Century Co.), contains valuable notes and many examples of Medieval plays.

Little Theater Classics, adapted for production by Samuel A. Eliot, Jr., Director of Dramatics at Smith College. In four volumes containing examples of Greek tragedy, miracle-plays, medieval farces, etc.; notes on production and historical data.

PLAYS FOR INDIVIDUAL READING AND GROUP-DISCUSSION

Abraham and Isaac, Miracle-Play, In *Representative English Plays*, and *Little Theater Classics*. Has been produced—difficult.

Everyman, Morality, *Everyman and Other Early Plays* (Houghton Mifflin Co.); also in *Representative English Plays* (Century Co.); published singly by Samuel French.

Patelin, French Farce, *Little Theater Classics*, Vol. II (Little, Brown & Co.).

Noah's Flood, from the Towneley Cycle *Representative English Plays*.

Plays Which Have Been Successfully Produced from Medieval Drama by Amateur Groups

Christmas Miracle Play, *Little Theater Classics*, Vol. I (Little, Brown & Co.).

The Wandering Scholar from Paradise, shrovetide farce by Hans Sachs, *Little Theater Classics*, Vol. IV.

Masque of Comus, John Milton, showing development of the medieval masque—beautiful out-of-door play (Baker).

Modern Moralities and Miracle-Plays Grown Out of the Medieval

Eagerheart, A. M. Buckton, New York.

Garments of Praise, Florence Converse (E. P. Dutton & Co.). Four miracle-plays for various days.

The Forest Princess and Other Masques, Constance D'Arcy Mackay (Henry Holt & Co.).

The Hour-Glass, A Morality, by W. B. Yeats (*Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I).

The Travelling Man, miracle-play, Lady Gregory (Samuel French).

Everywoman, A Modern Morality Play, by Browne (H. K. Fly Co.).

Everygirl, Mary S. Edgar (Woman's Press), morality for junior groups.

The play is ended. This the cue,
For Nobody to bid adieu.

But first he'll ask you, in the author's name,
Be merciful, be just and fair
To Everywoman, everywhere.

Her faults are many. Nobody's the blame.

—*Everywoman*, Walter Browne

THE SECOND EPISODE

ELIZABETHAN DRAMA: MARLOWE, SHAKESPEARE, JONSON

Though dramatic literature has been sporadic, dramatic entertainment by imitative action has been going steadily on since we first hear of it in connection with the Bacchic festivals of early Greece; and the dramatic instinct has been uninterruptedly alive since man's creation.

—Professor George Pierce Baker

RISE OF A NATIONAL DRAMA IN ENGLAND

As in Greece the virile spirit of a free people found expression in the exalted strains of lofty tragedy, after the battle of Salamis, so in England the national spirit which had struggled from out the shackles of medievalism and ecclesiasticism flung itself into the adventure of a new continent and rose with the defeat of the Armada to an exaltation of spirit which poured itself forth in the creation of a new literature; and the form in which that literature attained to its supreme excellence was the drama.

In England, and almost simultaneously in Spain and later in France, a national drama developed from the medieval mystery, miracle, and chronicle-play, influenced by the ancient Greek and Roman drama, but not imitative of it; built rather upon the foundation of the Middle Ages and sufficiently creative to be termed a national expression. The Italians, on the contrary, in their zeal for the New Learning, repudiated all that the medieval period had brought them, their brilliant *commedia dell' arte* and their splendid masques, and insisted upon absolute allegiance to the ancient models. The restraint of the "three unities" hung heavy upon them; they failed to realize that these unities were not so much a result of principles of art as of the conditions of

Greek production, which the great masters themselves avoided whenever it was possible to do so. In Italy the whole desire of their playwrights was to delight the learned, leaving the people to find whatever amusement they might in their surviving comedy of masks; in England the playwrights sought to please the audience by whatever means they could find, classical or otherwise. Consequently we find no national drama of Italy, although it was the center of the new learning and the new art. Abundance of national expression was there, but it took the form of architecture and painting rather than of the drama.

In England and Spain the medieval foundation was retained; the populace was invited to help in the building; and the edifice grew quite smoothly and happily from the long tedious moralities to the stirring episodes of the later chronicle-plays. The miracles vanished in England by the sixteenth century; the moralities and interludes lingered until the seventeenth. Shakespeare, whose youth was spent in the last half of the sixteenth century, had no doubt seen some of the guild-players and the crude efforts of strolling actors who put on farces in the inn-yards; he embodied some of his observations in his inimitable creation of Bottom, the weaver, in *Midsummer Night's Dream* and the instructions to the strolling players in *Hamlet*.

THE CHRONICLE-PLAY

Intermediate between the English miracle-play and the drama proper is the chronicle-play or historical drama which arose in the latter half of the sixteenth century. England suddenly became conscious of herself as a national entity, with a past to be preserved and a future to be made glorious; and in the chronicle-plays we have set forth the events of the various reigns in regular sequence, after the pattern of the medieval mystery and miracle. In the first chronicles there is no attempt at emphasis or selection and therefore no dramatic movement; they ramble on with all the leisurely inconsequence of their predecessors, the tiresome miracles.

The chronicle-play of *Lear*, acted in 1593, contains the historical basis of Shakespeare's tragedy, but it is history, not drama. When the brilliant writers of the Elizabethan period learned to emphasize the dramatic moments while presenting the historic facts which their audience relished, to combine history and drama, they produced a remarkable series of historical dramas, beginning with the *Edward II* of Marlowe and running through the sequence of English kings by Shakespeare.

THE TRAGEDY OF BLOOD

From the chronicle-play developed the tragedy of blood, which in the hands of Kyd became melodrama and under Shakespeare was elevated to an art. *Hamlet* is a tragedy of blood. The vengeance of kindred, urged on by the supernatural powers, forms the theme. It is curious to note that the English, although independent of the ancient art, borrowed whatever suited their fancy; and in the tragedy of blood it was the ghost of Seneca that they took over with tremendous effect.

THE FIRST ENGLISH TRAGEDY

It was but a step from the tragedy of blood and the chronicle-play to true tragedy. *Gorboduc*, acted before Queen Elizabeth in 1561, is the first English tragedy. It is a feast of bloodshed and barbarity, most of which went on behind the scenes but was related with gusto to the audience. Its basis is an old English legend, and it was done by two courtiers, Sackville and Norton. Sir Philip Sidney declared that it would have been a perfect piece of work if it had not violated the unity of place. It seems deadly dull to-day, but it furnished a framework of five acts and the beginnings of blank verse in the English drama. Each act was preceded by a dumb-show and closed with a chorus of "four old men of England."

EARLY ENGLISH COMEDY

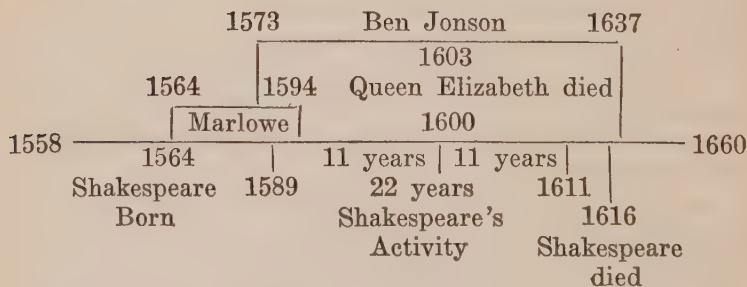
After the disappearance of the mysteries and moralities we find comedies in imitation of Plautus being written by schoolmasters and produced in the grammar-schools and the universities. Plautus was the polite literature upon which the English school-boy was nourished. The first English comedy, *Ralph Roister Doister*, is frankly imitative of Plautus. It was written by Nicholas Udall and produced at Eton. *Grammer Gurton's Needle*, the second comedy, is essentially English and is often revived by college dramatic clubs to-day.

ELIZABETHAN DRAMA

Let us make sure in the beginning that we understand what is meant by the term "Elizabethan drama." This name is applied to the dramatic production between the accession of Elizabeth and the closing of the theaters (1558-1642). While Shakespeare dominates the entire period in our thought, his activity is fairly within the eleven years on each side of the century-mark, leaving more than twice the number of years in each century filled by other names. Within this eventful eighty-four years, known as the Elizabethan Age, there were more than fifteen hundred plays written which were preserved; of these twelve hundred were produced; probably five hundred were acted again and again. Fully a score of playwrights made rich contribution to dramatic art, and to gain first-hand knowledge of the output would require the reading of some nine hundred plays. Thomas Heywood, alone, confesses to a hand in some two hundred and twenty.

About this great episode of dramatic history there has grown up a whole library of critical comment, and the best one can do in the limited space of a historical study is to note the outstanding figures and their relation to Shakespeare, the growth and decline of this spontaneous national expression, comparable to that of the Greeks, and to visualize the relation of the whole to our modern expression.

The year 1600 is a good point from which to survey the Elizabethan period. The reign of Elizabeth is nearly over; Shakespeare is at the height of his productivity and popularity. Behind him lie all of the historical plays except *Henry VIII*, and some of the best comedies: his great tragedies are still unwritten. His predecessors, to whom he owed much of pioneer experiment, Lyly, Peele, Greene, Kyd, and Marlowe, are all silent. Ben Jonson has just come into the lime-light with his *Every Man in His Humour* and is a formidable contemporary. Dekker is very busy getting in and out of jail and doing hack-work for the producer, Henslowe, for a scant livelihood. His *Shoemaker's Holiday*, produced first in 1599, is still the talk of the town. The "gentleman playwrights," Beaumont and Fletcher, who are to figure so largely in the later Elizabethan years, are mere youths. Webster's tragic talent is still unsuspected, since his *Duchess of Malfi* was not produced until after Shakespeare's retirement from the stage; and Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* did not see the light until 1625. From our vantage-point of the year 1600, only three years before the close of Elizabeth's reign, we are the very height of the dramatic impulse, and we find William Shakespeare, son of a yeoman of Stratford, in the center of the stage.



Graphic illustration of the Elizabethan episode and the relation of its three outstanding actors

ELIZABETHAN THEATERS

When the trade-guilds gave over the production of plays to strolling bands of actors, the inn-yards were the places where the audiences gathered, not only in outlying provinces, but in London itself. And when the inn-yards no longer sufficed to accommodate play and players, they were the models upon which the permanent theaters were built. There was the same hollow square, open to the sky, surrounded by covered galleries. Admission to the cheaper theaters was one penny; for another penny one might retire to the partial privacy of the thatched galleries; and for the extravagance of a third penny one might be given a seat. The gallants of the day carried their own stools and placed them upon the stage. The first permanent theaters were established in 1576. They attracted a noisy mob, where pickpockets plied their trade, and the plague hung above them like a pall. Small wonder that they were in high disfavor with the Puritan element and were denied the shelter of the city. The logic of a preacher of the day was not to be gainsaid: "The cause of the plague is sinne; the cause of sinne is the plays; therefore the cause of plagues is plays." Along the banks of the Thames outside the city walls the theaters were built, across fields where the gallants galloped on horseback and flung their bridles to young Shakespeare. There were the Rose and the Swan, the Curtain and the Theater.

In Shakespeare's time performances probably were given in the afternoon, since the illumination consisted merely of torches. In 1593 Richard Burbage built the Globe; and here in summer, and at Blackfriars in winter, were given most of Shakespeare's productions. There was no movable scenery. The parts of women were taken by "squeaking boys"; the costumes were gorgeous but historically incorrect; a change of placard sufficed to transport the imaginative Elizabethans from Shoreditch to Athens and back again. This explains the difficulty of producing with appropriate scenery the

plays of Shakespeare to-day and the degree to which they must be cut. The most effective presentations have kept to utmost simplicity of setting, such as that used by the Ben Greet Players, for example.

Upon the bare stage sat the young men about town, commenting audibly upon play and players; in the galleries were a few daring but respectable women, discreetly masked, among whom Queen Elizabeth herself sat on certain occasions; in the pit were tradesmen, apprentices, apple-women, pushing and quarreling. An excellent picture of the theater in France, which differed little from that of England, is found in the first act of Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*. It is a typical picture of the play-going audience of the period.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

What national event quickened patriotism and stimulated dramatic impulse?

Describe the transition of England from medieval spirit to modern.

Name several contributing causes to the great literary awakening.

Where may the influence of Plautus be found in English drama?

From what Latin playwright did Kyd get the idea of his *Spanish Tragedy*?

Comment upon the influence of the miracles and moralities in the drama.

What were the chronicle-plays and how did they become true drama?

What is the first English comedy?

What is the first English tragedy?

Contrast the national impulse of Italy with that of England.

Why did Italy, in the great impulse of her new learning, not produce a great national drama?

What conditions of the Elizabethan stage explain some

of the difficulties in modern production of their plays?

What is the Elizabethan era? Illustrate the relation of the three outstanding figures to the age and to each other.

FORERUNNERS OF SHAKESPEARE

The brilliant genius of Shakespeare so eclipses the lesser writers of his age that we are very apt to underestimate their worth. In a survey of the English national drama we should try, for a moment, to exclude Shakespeare, and to realize that we should have had a great national impulse, a great national expression, without him. Countless minor writers, in every age, live, work, and contribute their mite to the foundation upon which another shall build, and when the master-builder is at last come the efforts of those who laboriously laid the first stones are forgotten in the triumph of the final arch.

When Shakespeare came to London to try his fortune, considerable success had been achieved by the early group of playwrights, each of whom had contributed something to the development of a national drama. There was Peele, who wrote graceful court comedies and was known for his good versification and graceful allusions to mythology; there was Lyly, who introduced prose dialogue and a bombastic and artificial style known as euphuism, which influenced prose writings for many years; there was Kyd with his melodrama, bringing in the ghost of Seneca to the English stage; there was Robert Greene with his thirty years, "dashed with sun and splashed with tears, wan with revel, red with wine," and there was Marlowe, ill-fated Kit Marlowe, the greatest of them all. We need not pause with the individual life-story of these dramatists so soon to be eclipsed; let us try to remember that there were five of them who were best known and remembered, that they were all well educated, all lived by their labors, were actors as well as playwrights, and suffered from the license of the times and its riotous living, two of them unto the death. To fix them in point of time, they all lived before 1600.

In connection with this period, the character of each of these men and the living reality of the group will be indelibly impressed by the reading of *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern* by Alfred Noyes. His characterization of Robert Greene and Christopher Marlowe is especially fine. It is very unlikely that this boisterous group frequenting the Mermaid recognized anything of the master in the man from the country who was doing over old plays, acting odd parts, and making a living as best he could. We can imagine Bacon droning in the chimney-corner:

There are no poets in this age of ours,
Not to compare with Plautus. They are all
Dead, the men that were famous in old days.
There's verse enough no doubt,—
But English is no language for the muse!
Where's Euripides?

And we can fancy Will Shakespeare solemnly nodding assent to the great man's dictum while Destiny shook his sides with silent laughter.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE (1564-93)

Christopher Marlowe was the incarnation of the brilliant spirit of the Italian Renaissance transplanted to English soil. He started on his spectacular career as a playwright with a degree from Cambridge, although he was the son of a cobbler of Canterbury. His plays were immediately successful. While Shakespeare had to work his way into popular favor, the first tragedy of Marlowe, the story of *Tamburlaine*, swept London off its feet. Singularly enough these two great dramatists were born in the same year, but the early-flowering genius and better educational advantages of Marlowe gave him easy precedence over his slower rival. Even in his earliest play we have glimpses of that spirit of revolt which allies this sixteenth-century poet so closely to modern youth. We may parallel this wild speech from *Tamburlaine* by many a modern poet's defiance:

Come, let us march against the powers of Heaven
And set black streamers in the firmament
To signify the slaughter of the Gods.

And again:

Come, let us charge our spears and pierce the breast
Whose shoulders bear the axis of the world.

His themes suggest the wild tumult of his own soul—the denunciation of the Christians put into the mouth of the Jew of Malta, the blasphemous Tamburlaine, the God-defying Faust. Something of his own despair of soul in its question went into the superhuman conflict of Faust with its final agony. It is Marlowe himself who speaks to us through the lines of Mephistopheles:

Think'st thou that I who saw the face of God,
And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells?

With the swiftness of a falling star Marlowe disappeared, leaving that patient, slower hand to perfect the drama he had so brilliantly begun. Kit Marlowe was killed in a tavern-brawl at thirty.

Dead, like a dog in a drunken brawl,
Dead for a phial of paint, a taffeta gown.

And shut within those lyric lips what cry
Of unborn beauty, sunk in utter night,
Lost world of song, sealed in an unknown sky.¹

For an interpretation of his life, read *Marlowe*, by Josephine Preston Peabody. For Marlowe's influence upon Shakespeare, study *The Jew of Malta* and compare with the character of Shylock.

¹ From *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern*, Alfred Noyes (Frederick A. Stokes Co.).

STUDY OF Dr. Faustus

(Reading of entire play by each member.)

See the Faust legend under Goethe's *Faust*. In this play may be found Marlowe's love of the occult and his religious doubt. Note the survival of the morality-play in his introduction of the Seven Deadly Sins. Special passages for study are the apostrophe to Helen and the final anguish of Faust, which are not excelled in all literature. The final catastrophe is like that of the supreme efforts of the Greek masters. It is the torture of the soul beside which physical torture and death become insignificant. Compare the treatment of the same theme by Goethe.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Just how much did Shakespeare find ready to his hand when he came to London?

Who were the five predecessors to whom he was most indebted?

Who perfected the use of blank verse in the drama?

What was Lyly's contribution to the drama?

Which of Shakespeare's forerunners evolved the graceful court comedy?

Who was the father of melodrama?

What play of Marlowe's foreshadows the character of Shylock?

Which play most fully expresses his genius?

How long were Marlowe and Shakespeare together upon the Elizabethan stage?

Which one of the early playwrights left an unkindly criticism of Shakespeare?

Is there a suggestion of the modern spirit of revolt in the work of Marlowe?

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564-1616)

Shakespeare who taught by none, did first impart
To Fletcher wit, to laboring Jonson art.

—John Dryden

The details of the life of Shakespeare are shrouded in obscurity, and it matters very little. The spirit of Shakespeare is in his work, and only the spirit is universal and eternal. We know less about him than we do about almost any of his contemporaries.

It is interesting, but perhaps not vital, to know that the greatest dramatic poet England has produced was not a university wit, in a day when education was considered most essential to a man of the world, but a lad who left the free grammar-school at fourteen for the school of life. He probably got enough of Greek and Latin to enable him to make free translations, although Ben Jonson speaks of his "little Latin and less Greek." He was married when under nineteen years to Anne Hathaway of Shottery, and three years later drifted to London, where tradition loves to tell that he held horses for the gallants in front of Burbage's Theater, later served as call-boy, and finally was promoted to hack work in revising plays and acting in minor parts. During the summer the London players went on tour, and it is very likely that the outlying provinces saw Shakespeare in the part of the ghost in his own play, *Hamlet*, or as Adam in *As You Like It*.

It matters very little to his readers whether he was happily married, or whether he reveals his own sorrows in the sonnets; his life with its joys and sorrows was all his own, his work is for all time.

During the later years of his residence in London he paid frequent visits to Stratford and in 1612 retired from the stage with his comfortable competence to live in ease with his family. But his days were few. In 1616, after a visit with his friend, Ben Jonson, he fell ill with malignant fever and died three days later. One of the great griefs of his life was the loss of his only son during the days of his London popularity. The lineal descent from Shakespeare terminated with the death of his daughter, without children, only ten years after the close of the Elizabethan era which his name had crowned.

It is reasonably certain that the Elizabethans, with the exception of Ben Jonson, failed to recognize the preëminence of Shakespeare; they were too close to the colossal figure to see how it towered above them. The course of his life, as it is revealed to us, seems singularly fortunate. While men of his day suffered and starved and flashed across his path like wandering stars, the glover's son from Stratford went steadily on; he prospered financially; he was well liked by contemporaries and at court; he held the center of the stage for twenty-two years in the most brilliant literary period England has ever known and retired by his own wish to spend his last days in ease at the New Place in Stratford. He never knew, apparently, the ups and downs of fortune that his contemporaries all experienced, and yet who among them has sounded the depths of despair in the drama that he has sounded?

We like to think that, whatever the middle years of his struggle may have been, after the storm came calm, and that the peace of Prospero where love triumphs over hate and fear was finally his.

THE APPROACH TO SHAKESPEARE'S WORK

Around the man Shakespeare has grown up a whole literature of conjecture; around his works has grown a library of scholarly comment. If we wish to know the force of human genius, we should read Shakespeare, says Hazlitt; if we wish to see the insignificance of human learning, we may study the commentators. The moral is: do not approach Shakespeare by way of the critics but directly.

To read the plays aright, one must know something of men and life as the dramatist saw them, in an age when sanitation was unknown and dirt and vice flaunted themselves openly in the public streets; an age when superstition held men in thrall. To what good use the poet put the fear of the supernatural, and what a wealth of fairy-lore he found along English hedge-rows! Ariel and Caliban, Titania and Puck,

the Weird Sisters—these were all as real to Elizabethan audiences as Antony and Cleopatra. To read Shakespeare aright one must know something of the dewy lanes of Shottery and Stratford from which he drew such lyric strains; of the long walks to London past public houses where he paused to sip a friendly cup drawn by a blooming Dame Hacket.

You have never tramped along that countryside? By Bunton Heath? Ah, well, you would not know my fairylands.

One must know something, too, of the bare stage and the noisy Elizabethan audience and remember that Shakespeare was not writing his plays for posterity but for the groundlings of London. It will help over many a difficult passage to bear this fact in mind. Had he foreseen that his plays would be placed in the homes of to-day alongside the Bible, he might have written—worse plays—who knows? He was writing for the England he loved and understood, as no man before him had understood, and along with the coarse jokes and rough repartee, he poured out the best of him, trusting that somehow it would reach the heart of his England; and it did. If the audience of Shakespeare was lacking in delicacy and refinement, it was the crudeness and naïve audacity of youth and not the moral rot of a decadent old age. To have great singers we must have great listeners, too, said another poet much later; and not since the days of Greek tragedy had there been such an audience, so imaginative and responsive, as this one in the golden days of Merry England.

THREE PHASES OF DRAMATIC WORK

The poet began his work with tales of love and intrigue and with the patriotism of the martial stories of England's kings; then with manhood he confronted the sterner problems of life, and love became mixed with sorrow, the thread of tragedy crept in and out. With middle age came the

soul-shaking tragedies in which ingratitude of children, faithlessness of friends, and treachery of subjects formed the themes, in quick succession. There was an afterglow when the storm was past, in which feuds were forgiven and family ties united. It is significant that three of Shakespeare's finest women, Miranda, Perdita, and Imogen, were created in the later period of his work. They are the expression of his mature experience.

To the first period, of apprenticeship, belong the first part of *Henry VI*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. They are adaptations from the work of predecessors.

To the second phase, characterized by originality of theme and plot, belong the historical series, except *Henry VIII*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*. There was no hint, with the exception of the creation of Shylock and the "star-crossed lovers," of the great tragedies to follow. The merry masque of the midsummer night's revelry, the broad farce of *The Taming of the Shrew*, and the delicious foolery of *Much Ado About Nothing* carried no prophecy of the heavier vein within.

The third phase shows the full development of the dramatist's power in form and content. Beginning just a year before the century point of 1600, the great tragedies followed in swift succession until 1612, with an occasional bit of romantic comedy thrown in between. *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Othello*, *Measure for Measure*, *King Lear*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Timon of Athens*, *Pericles*, *Coriolanus*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, *Macbeth*, *Cymbeline*, and the last of the historical plays, *Henry VIII*.

No serious student of literature will care to leave a single play of the great master of the drama unread. Many study groups are devoting years of consideration to Shakespeare alone, but for the purpose of this survey of the development

of the drama at least three plays should be read by individual members and discussed. Better still is the reading or production of one of the shorter plays. The writer has heard very creditable group reading of *Merchant of Venice*, *Taming of the Shrew*, and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, given in the ordinary club-room, without costumes or accessories. Several rehearsals under a director are necessary, and cutting is almost always advisable. One remembers a play when the lines have been spoken so much better than from reading merely. It is well to see the plays whenever possible, even by amateur performers. It helps in interpretation. A club whose membership consists entirely of women put on, with appropriate costuming and scenery, *As You Like It* (out of doors), *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Twelfth Night*. The study of one play from each of the phases of Shakespeare's development is suggested: the first and second parts of *Henry IV*, for historical plays, perhaps; *Merchant of Venice* or *Midsummer Night's Dream* from the second phase; and one of the great tragedies, *Lear*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, or *Othello*, from the third. Even then one needs the *Tempest* or *Cymbeline* and a romantic comedy to round out this composite art which was Shakespeare's. He experimented with all forms and left them more beautiful and complete. One can never be satisfied with less than the whole of his creation; representation by selection is so utterly inadequate.

HINTS FOR THE STUDY OF ANY PLAY

Since any modern edition of Shakespeare's plays contains such abundant helps and comments, space will not be given to detailed consideration of an example. In taking up any play the reader will wish to determine certain things. First, its source, whether original in plot or adapted from an earlier theme. The place and time of its action, whether the unities have been observed or ignored. The date of its first production and something of famous presentations and modern revivals. One may very easily find data concerning

great actors and actresses who have interpreted the rôles and this adds to the interest.

Fundamental idea: Does the play center about revenge, as in *Hamlet*; jealousy, as in *Othello*; ingratitude, as in *Lear*; or ambition, as in *Macbeth*?

Dramatic Structure: Note the rising action to climax and decline.

Plot: Is it a single plot, or are there counter-plots?

Characterization: The depiction of characters and their reaction upon each other.

The use of comedy as a relief and the treatment of the supernatural.

The philosophy of life embodied in the drama.

The poetry of the play. Study of the lyrical passages.

APPROACH TO SHAKESPEARE

Harley Granville Barker, in his discussion of Shakespeare in the *Outline of Literature*, suggests the following plays to illustrate the steps by which Shakespeare ascended his art; they do not claim to cover his moods, nor to include some of his greatest work which requires to be read separately, but they will make the reader sufficiently familiar with Shakespeare to feel at home with his work wherever he may encounter it:

A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Romeo and Juliet.

Henry IV, Parts I and II.

Twelfth Night.

Julius Cæsar.

Macbeth.

To this list, the writer would add *The Tempest*.

A FEW REFERENCE BOOKS FOR CRITICAL STUDY

The Life of Shakespeare, Sidney Lee.

William Shakespeare, Georg Brandes.

Shakespeare, A Critical Study of His Mind and Art, Edward Dowden.

Outline Guide to Shakespeare, Paul Kaufman.

Shakespeare's England, edited by Sir Walter Raleigh.

Shakespeare's Theater, Ashley H. Thorndike.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

How much of the life of an author is it necessary or desirable to know?

What element probably contributed to Shakespeare's steady success?

Did his contemporaries correctly appraise his genius?

Describe the three periods of his activity.

What is the best approach to a Shakespearian play for serious study?

Where did Shakespeare find his fairies?

Where did he find the types for his Athenian citizens?

Comment upon the Elizabethan audience.

Which plays contain the best characterization of women?

Name a farce in Shakespeare's plays. A masque. A melodrama. A chronicle.

In what plays do we find his mature reaction to life?

What parts did the dramatist take in his own plays?

BEN JONSON (1573-1637)

Of the dramatists of the Elizabethan Age, Ben Jonson is the third great figure, taking the center of the stage after Marlowe and Shakespeare. Although he was but nine years younger than his great contemporaries, he outlived Marlowe by thirty-three years and Shakespeare by twenty-one. There is something very pathetic in the lonely figure visiting again the Mermaid where the voices of Marlowe, Green, Dekker, Lyly, and Shakespeare had once made merry:

Marlowe is dead, and Greene is in his grave,

And sweet Will Shakespeare long ago is gone!

Our Ocean-shepherd sleeps beneath the wave;

Robin is dead, and Marlowe in his grave.
Why should I stay to chant an idle stave,
And in my Mermaid Tavern drink alone?

From Westminster Ben Jonson went to Cambridge, where he did not complete the course but afterward received a degree. At twenty-four years of age he was an actor at the Fortune and very soon after began to write plays. His first piece, *Every Man in His Humour*, was performed by Shakespeare's company, and Shakespeare took a part in the cast. The unfortunate interruption to Jonson's dramatic career, when he was imprisoned for killing a man in a duel, prevented his sharing the popularity of Shakespeare at the height of the latter's activity. His first tragedy, *Sejanus*, was produced at the Globe in 1603, and again Shakespeare was in the cast. For a time the occasion of the death of the queen turned the attention of the playwright to masques, which he brought to great excellence of form. Then he went back to comedy. His impetuous disposition and loyalty to friends is shown by the voluntary sharing of the imprisonment of Chapman and Marston when the king took exception to some of their lines. This incident has been very happily treated by Mr. Noyes in his *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern*. Some of his best work follows this escapade. Until Shakespeare's death he produced steadily. Then came a dormant period of nearly ten years. In 1625, the desperate strait of his finances set him seriously to work again. Two more masques were written, and an unfinished manuscript, a pastoral drama of much beauty, was found among his papers when he died in 1637.

Jonson was more scholarly in his tastes than his contemporaries; he was fond of learning and loved to cling to the classic themes and ways. He wrote his plays first in prose and transcribed them into verse. Although he ventured into tragedy, he is most distinguished as a writer of comedies. *Every Man in His Humour* is the first English comedy of character and was produced with great success during the

Restoration. It was revived by Garrick in the eighteenth century.

Ben Jonson was in turn student, tradesman, soldier, actor, convict, and court entertainer. He knew the highest and the lowest society of his day and was well fitted to create his numerous types of character. Impostors, court ladies, courtizans, all appear with equal ease, and in his work there is an incomparable picture of the manners of the period. The associates of Ben Jonson in literature, drama, and court embraced every well-known name in England for three generations. As a friend he was loyal, and sincere. His relationship with Shakespeare was always too close and generous to permit of envy or depreciation. Each furthered the other's plans, and when Shakespeare died it was Jonson who supplied an immortal appreciation to preface his collected works.

For if I thought my judgment were of years,
I should commit thee surely with thy peers;
And tell how far thou didst our Lyly outshine,
Or sporting Kyd, or Marlowe's mighty line:
And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek,
From thence to honour thee I would not seek
For names; but call forth thundering Æschylus,
Euripedes and Sophocles to us . . .
He was not of an age, but for all time.

STUDY OF *The Alchemist*

The Alchemist, written in 1610, may well be chosen as an example for study, among the many plays of Ben Jonson. It is easily found, appearing in most anthologies of Elizabethan plays.

It was written with the object of showing up the trickery of a crowd of impostors who were cheating the London populace and playing upon their credulity. It also contains violent attacks upon the Puritans. It is a satire against quacks and humbugs. The theme of the play is very well set forth in the argument with which the dramatist prefaced it:

The sickness hot, a master-quit, for fear,
 His house in town, and left one servant there;
 Ease him corrupted, and gave means to know
 A Cheater and his punk, who now brought low,
 Leaving their narrow practice, were become
 Cozeners at large; and only wanting some house
 To set up at . . .

The servant lets his master's house to the Cheater, who pretends to be the master and a famous alchemist; here he collects gold and trinkets and all sorts of useful things which he promises to convert into gold; it is an amusing story. The gullible Sir Epicure Mammon is well drawn. Subtle, the alchemist, continues to postpone the day when the transmutation shall take place.

Let me see,
 How's the moon now? Eight, nine days hence
 He will be silver potate; then three days
 Before he citronise. Some fifteen days
 The magesterium will be perfected.

The dilemma of the servant when the real master arrives unexpectedly must be read to be appreciated. The master has his little joke also, turning out the impostors, driving off the irate frequenters of the place, and incidentally keeping all the booty that had accumulated.

The servant, Face, who manages to lie out of every difficulty and come out ahead in every chance, always seizing the situation and turning it to his own advantage, is a clever bit of characterization.

OTHER ELIZABETHAN DRAMATISTS

While Shakespeare was holding forth at the Globe, the most popular London theater, Dekker and Middleton were writing comedies for some of the lesser theaters. It was quite the fashion to collaborate upon a play, and Dekker

worked with most of his contemporaries at one time or another. He admitted having a hand in seventy-six plays. His own best work is *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, which depicts the life of London tradespeople in a day when it was much more usual to write of courts. Thomas Middleton in his *Game of Chess* treats of the king and court allegorically and is the originator of English Political Satire. A play of his called *The Witch* so strongly resembles *Macbeth* in some of its details that it has raised a question of a possible collaboration of Middleton with Shakespeare in the latter play.

Thomas Heywood had a prominent part in the writing of more than two hundred plays. He wrote prologues and epilogues for other dramatists and was the best writer of interludes. His best play is *A Woman Killed with Kindness*.

Beaumont and Fletcher, called the "gentlemen playwrights" from their high birth and social position, rank very high in dramatic art. They worked together in a rare harmony of diverse powers. The best example of their joint work is *Philaster, or Love Lies A-Bleeding*. Their work is clever in construction, contains lively dialogue, and is quite in accord with the corruption of the court of James I.

Marston and Chapman are names to be included in a roll of the playwrights. John Webster made a contribution to tragedy with his *Duchess of Malfi*, which is remarkable, even in this brilliant age; and Ford embodied in his plays lyrical passages which do not suffer from comparison with Beaumont and Fletcher.

RÉSUMÉ

The dramatic impulse reached its climax with Shakespeare and Jonson. From that point we have the decline. When Shakespeare retired in 1616, Fletcher, with whom he had been working in the King's Company for some time, succeeded him as Poet of the King's Players and carried forward the work. Fletcher, in turn worked in coöperation with Massinger, who made a distinct contribution to the re-

ligious drama of the period and left a play which is still produced occasionally, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*. The character of the extortioner, Sir Giles Overreach, is a justly famous one in dramatic literature. Massinger and Shirley worked together in Massinger's later years—Shirley was destined to be the last of the great dramatists—so that the impulse may be traced through this one company of players directly through Shakespeare to Shirley and so to the close of the great episode.

Eighty-four years, the span of an ordinary lifetime, and yet how crowded with events! Out of the miracles and moralities had grown a great dramatic literature. Tragedy had gone all the way from *Gorboduc* to *Othello*; farce had gone from *Noah's Wife* to *The Taming of the Shrew*. The medieval masque had grown into the delicate fantasy of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Romantic comedy and romantic tragedy had developed into distinct forms; political satire had come into existence; and the comedy of character was well developed. But the drama moves on to its inevitable decline. Even before the death of Shakespeare there were signs of the passing of the high idealism which had marked the Renaissance. Puritanism was developing. The nation was to alternate between ascetism and indulgence, and the drama of the Restoration was to make a last pitiful attempt to stand for the joys of sense and the world—but all that is another story, as Mr. Kipling would say.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Discuss the contribution of Ben Jonson to the Elizabethan Age.

What was the personal relation of Shakespeare and Jonson?

How did Jonson's treatment differ from that of most of his contemporaries?

Why was he especially fitted to portray many and varied characters?

What service did he render Shakespeare after the latter's death?

What is the theme of *The Alchemist*?

Who were the realists of the Elizabethan Age?

Who originated political satire?

What other writers of tragedy contributed richly to the age aside from Shakespeare?

How was the dramatic impulse carried on through a single company to its close?

What influence was contributory to the decline of the drama?

What had been gained by the great Elizabethan episode?

REFERENCES FOR READING

Representative English Plays, Tatlock and Martin (Century Co.). This single volume contains illustrations of the development of the drama from the Middle Ages to the end of the nineteenth century.

The Plays of Shakespeare. Any good modern edition.

Tales of the Mermaid Tavern, Alfred Noyes (Frederick A. Stokes Co.).

Marlowe, a drama of the period, Josephine Preston Peabody.

Will Shakespeare, Clemence Dane (Macmillan Co.).

PLAYS OF THE PERIOD WHICH HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY PRODUCED

The Old Wife's Tale, by George Peele, *Little Theater Classics*, Vol. III (Little, Brown & Co.). (Contains full directions for staging.)

Ricardo and Viola, by Beaumont and Fletcher, *Little Theater Classics*, Vol. I.

A Woman Killed with Kindness, by Thomas Heywood, *Representative English Plays*.

The Loathed Lover, adapted from the *Changeling* of Middleton and Rowley, *Little Theater Classics*, Vol. II.

The Duchess of Pavy, by John Ford, adapted from *Love's Sacrifice*, *Little Theater Classics*, Vol. III.

A New Way to Pay Old Debts, by Philip Massinger, *Harvard Classics*, Vol. 47.

Twelfth Night, *Romeo and Juliet*, *As You Like It*, and *Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare.

THE THIRD EPISODE

CONTINENTAL DRAMA: SPAIN, FRANCE, GERMANY

I

SPANISH DRAMA: CERVANTES, LOPE DE VEGA, CALDERÓN

Invention, interest, sprightly turns in plays,
Say what they will, are Spain's peculiar praise;
Hers are the plots which strict attention seize,
Full of intrigue and yet disclosed with ease:
Hence scenes and acts her fertile stage affords
Unknown, unrivalled on the foreign boards.

—Translated from the Spanish by G. H. Lewes

EARLY DEVELOPMENT

WE find the first great dramatic impulse upon the Continent rising in Spain, almost contemporary with that of England but developing a little more slowly. Cervantes, one of the three great names of this dramatic episode, died in the same year that saw the passing of Shakespeare. Calderón, the last of the three, was born when Shakespeare was thirty-six years of age, at the turning-point of the century when the English dramatist was at the height of his powers.

But the three great names in his period shine in a constellation of lesser writers, some of whom enjoyed a large amount of national fame.

Spanish drama is much more closely related to the medieval than is the English. It fails to concentrate upon dramatic events and is content with repetition and a loosely woven sequence of incidents. Like the English it was stimulated by patriotic ardor, but it often lacks historic truth.

Spain had very good reason for patriotic fervor: she had thrown off the yoke of the Moors and had discovered a New World. The difference in treatment of themes by Spanish playwrights is due to certain racial characteristics rather than outside influence. While the English were bold and energetic, the Spaniards were ascetic and mystic. They clung with the utmost loyalty to the tenets of the church; we find fidelity to church and king to be one of the strongest motives in the Spanish drama. The other strong dramatic motive is the conception of honor, which entailed the obligation to avenge with blood every supposed stain. This motive is prominent in the Spanish *Cid*, afterward developed by Corneille in the great French drama, *Le Cid*.

Spanish literature owes little to its kings. Secular drama grew in spite of the opposition of kings and ecclesiastic powers—with religion it never had any quarrel—and, even before Cervantes, had begun to throw off the restraints of Italian models and find national expression.

LOPE DE RUEDA, THE SPANISH THESPIST

Lope de Rueda in Spain, like Thespis of Greece, is the traditional founder of the dramatic art. He was playwright, actor, and manager. With a strolling band of players he went about Spain carrying all his properties in one small bag. The entire outfit consisted of a few beards and wigs, four shepherd's coats and crooks. When a play was to be given, planks laid upon blocks served as a stage, and some old blankets were hung up for a dressing-room. Behind these, as a screen, old ballads were sung during the progress of the play.

Several samples of the plays of Lope de Rueda's day remain to us, plays in which he probably acted. There is a very amusing farce called *Olives*, in which the wife bids her husband plant an olive-tree. Then they begin arguing over the price they shall ask for the olives when they are grown. They finally fall to beating their daughter until a neighbor

interferes and reminds them that they are selling their olives before the tree is planted.

MIGUEL DE CERVANTES SAAVEDRA (1547-1616)

Cervantes, the first of the three great creators of Spanish drama, wrote eight plays which were superior to any that had gone before but wanting in dramatic power. His contribution to fiction was so much greater than his gift to drama that the latter is not always appreciated at its full worth.

Cervantes saw some of the plays of Lope de Rueda acted in a rude hall at Madrid where he was sent to pick up such education as he might, and these, together with his acquaintance with Ovid and Vergil, no doubt turned his mind toward literature of imagination. At twenty-two, with no profession nor income, he started off for a year of wandering, which was quite the custom among students of that period. He was received kindly, for the Spaniards' attitude toward learning had become proverbial; "If you give to learning," they said, "you give to God." The wandering scholar might one day add to the glory of God through letters.

But the adventurous scholar dropped the pen for the sword. He was maimed at Lepanto and captured by the Moors. After eight years of slavery he was ransomed and returned to Spain, where he wrote several romances. The fame of Lope de Vega was now attracting attention, and Cervantes determined to try his hand at the making of plays.

He wrote, in all, about thirty plays, but only a few are now remembered. He utterly failed to approach the favor which rewarded the efforts of his rival. These plays lack the brisk inventive faculty which characterizes the best Spanish plots. We are indebted to Cervantes, however, for the creation of a type which enlivened many a scene of later drama; in Sancho Panza, the comic servant, we have the ancestor of a long and entertaining line.

By the parody of the manners of chivalry, *Don Quixote*,

Cervantes won his supreme success in the profession of letters; not as a dramatist.

LOPE DE VEGA (LOPE FELIX DE VEGA CARPIO) (1562-1635)

Spanish drama first became an art under Lope de Vega. While it is true that he did not create the national drama, he molded the material ready to his hand and fixed its form and spirit. He had a fresh field, and he explored it thoroughly, leaving about eight hundred plays, in every known form, which have served as models not only for his own countrymen but for Shakespeare as well. These plays exploit gallantry, often at the expense of morality. "Love excuses everything," was the motto of Lope de Vega. He pleased the people by weaving in the old ballads which they loved, and they repaid him by an adulation seldom accorded to a man of letters. They followed him through the streets and showered attentions upon him.

It is pleasant, after recording the heartbreak and poverty all along the way that men of genius have walked, to write of Lope de Vega and his rose-strewn path. The Pope made him a doctor of theology and Knight of Malta; managers fought for his plays, and they were seized before the ink was scarcely dry upon them. And, singularly enough, the plays were not as bad as this popular success would indicate. The taste of the people of Spain had not been perverted by psychoanalysis and morbid sex themes. Lope de Vega died a rich man and was given a nine days' funeral by his admiring contemporaries, and long afterward his name was the proverbial standard of excellence: a beautiful and virtuous woman was called a "Lope woman," or a perfect day, "a regular Lope day"! Shades of Robert Greene, John Keats, and Sidney Lanier, a few crumbs from this poet's table would have fed you all!

Lope de Vega devised that ingenuity of plot which has since been known as Spanish. He covered the whole range of dramatic art. There are tragedies, mysteries, farces, com-

edies, romances, and any number of combinations of form, since the Spanish dramatists mingled tragedy and comedy in a way unknown to the Greeks. It is interesting to know that the ease of his life did not enervate this man of letters. Like Æschylus, he was a patriot, serving in the host of the Invincible Armada.

He worked with the same limitations which Shakespeare encountered. His plays were given in daylight upon a bare stage with no scenery. Change of place was indicated by the dialogue which carried the audience in and out and back and forth with no regard for time or space. The noise and disorder that characterized the English inn-yards was not lacking in Spanish assemblages. However hastily he wrote, Lope de Vega was always poetic, always romantic, and he always pleased the people. His plays were acted in Naples, Milan, and Constantinople.

PEDRO CALDERÓN DE LA BARCA (1600-81)

Calderón, the greatest of Spanish poets, whose fame goes beyond the limits of nationality and is universal, was born in the mid-year of Shakespeare's activity. When he began to write, the Spanish drama was also at its high-water mark. Lope de Vega was still living and generously added his encouragement to his successor, whose fame was to rival his own. Calderón found a national drama ready for his hand and was quite content to build without much experimentation upon the foundations already laid. He brought to his task the patriotic fervor of a soldier and the religious zeal of a priest: he served ten years in the army, and he was educated for the church, becoming finally superior of the brotherhood of San Pedro in Madrid.

The familiar Spanish motives of church and king dominate his drama with something added—a sort of supernatural fantasy, a mysticism, like subtle incense pervading the whole. He loved somber situations and discussed religious themes from a narrow medieval point of view, but always sincerely

and with great power. *The Devotion of the Cross* is a noble piece of literature which every serious student will wish to read, but it is so gloomy and somber that it has been declared as unfit for the stage as Shelley's *Cenci*.

Calderón followed the lead of Cervantes in introducing abstract qualities into his work in human form. Sin, Repentance, Taste, and many other qualities are personified and stalk through his plays.

The three outstanding figures of Spanish drama were friends. Calderón dramatized *Don Quixote*, and Lope de Vega did many a friendly turn for young Calderón. With these three the golden age of Spanish literature reached its height. All three of them were soldiers; one of them was a priest; but primarily, while serving church and state, they were poets, singing not for a day, but for all time.

RÉSUMÉ

The student who is making a survey of the development of the drama will visualize the Spanish impulse as one which contributed all unconsciously to many later movements; will remember that it excelled in fertility of production and ingenuity of plot; that it left hundreds of plays in every known form, which were the literary storehouse of all Europe; that its dominating motives were loyalty to king and church and a fantastic conception of honor.

STUDY OF *Life is a Dream* BY CALDERÓN

In this, as in every other instance when a study of an illustration is suggested, the entire play is to be read by every member of the group.

Of all Calderón's plays this is the most readable because it is most universal in its theme. It embodies the idea, which many philosophers have sought to teach, that the material things by which we are surrounded are an illusion and that the only verities are the things of the spirit. One who has been fortunate enough to hear the interpretation of the

drama by Dr. Edward Howard Griggs will realize to the full the beauty and significance of the lines. It may be called a symbolic drama, antedating by many years the modern movement toward symbolism and carrying a message of profound and thought-provoking power.

The plot of the play reminds the reader of the *Œdipus* of Sophocles, with its vain precautions to avert the fatalities of an ill-omened birth. The very precautions make the tragedy inevitable.

Sigismund, son of the king, of whom it was foretold at birth that he would supplant his father, is kept in solitary confinement. When he comes to manhood, the king, to test his temperament, has him drugged and brought to court, where he is awakened and saluted as prince. The natural indignation of the high-spirited youth at his treatment is interpreted as violence, and he is again drugged and taken back to his solitary home, where he is told that he has but dreamed. There is a reminder of Hamlet in the words of Sigismund:

How oft have I
Waited, and in the whisper of my heart
Prayed for the slanting hand of heaven to strike
The blow myself I dared not, out of fear
Of that Hereafter, worse, they say, than here.

There is a rebellion in the kingdom, and some of the nobles come to release the king's son and support his cause against his father. Once more Sigismund finds himself saluted as prince. The quick transition from court to cave, and cave to court again, cause him to speculate upon the illusion of the dream, and to wonder which, after all, is the reality: the life he experiences or the dream he remembers so distinctly. He finally concludes to pardon those who have wronged him and to find his solution in right action whatever the experience may be, whether it be illusion or fact.

We know not which is which; and dream so-called
Itself inweaving so inextricably

Eight Dramas of Calderón, translated by Edward Fitzgerald, and published by the Macmillan Co., contains *Life Is a Dream*.

Olives, by Lope de Rueda, in *Spanish Drama*, by George Henry Lewes.

The Star of Seville, by Lope de Vega, translated by Philip M. Hayden, in *Chief European Dramatists* (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Six Dramas of Calderón, Fitzgerald (E. P. Dutton & Co.).

II

THE DRAMA IN FRANCE: CORNEILLE, RACINE, MOLIÈRE

The name of Louis XIV, with whom the Cæsarism of the Bourbons culminated, recalls not only the splendor and viciousness of his court, the garish magnificence of his palace of Versailles, the bravery of his generals, but several names of great men of letters whose fame would live even if the "sun-king" were forgotten.

—Maurice Francis Egan

THE RISE OF A NATIONAL DRAMA IN FRANCE

ALTHOUGH the mystery, as performed in the market-places of the thirteenth century, is still represented in certain parts of Brittany, the national drama of France was not built upon the medieval structure, as was that of England and Spain, but derived its impulse directly from the classic art. The influence of the moralities may be traced in the work of Molière; but of the mimed mysteries, once so popular, there is not a hint.

In the sixteenth century there was a great enthusiasm for the translation of Greek and Latin plays, and young Pierre de Ronsard translated one from Aristophanes, which he produced with brilliant success in 1549. This led to the establishment of a school of dramatic art, with Etienne Jodelle at the head, which ignored the Christian mysteries and imitated the form and theme of the ancient tragedies. Jodelle was eclipsed, in turn, by Garnier, who used the Greek model with choruses.

France was not immune to the admiration of Europe for all things Italian which characterized the period, and a strain of Italian comedy crept into the more serious classic stuff. From Larivey, a writer of prose comedy in the Italian style,

Molière received some inspiration. Until Molière the prose comedy found no serious followers.

The tragedies of this early experimental stage were at best a weak imitation of past grandeur; the comedies were coarse and immoral; and at the beginning of the seventeenth century the farce was especially popular with Paris audiences. Of the French farce there is no more famous example than the medieval *Patelin* or *Monsieur Pathelin*.

THE TRANSITION LINK: ALEXANDRE HARDY

The work of Alexandre Hardy forms the transition link between the medieval and the classical drama in France. It was the custom for bands of players to take to the road after Easter. They gave performances at weddings in rich country families, entertained guests at the châteaux, and performed at fairs. It was not altogether a matter of choice, this tour of the provinces; the season in Paris was not very profitable for the profession. The king and court had free seats, and the musketeers and their followers forced their way into the theaters.

Hardy wrote on an average twenty plays a year for thirty years—six hundred plays! And he received for this labor most of the time the ordinary salary of an actor. Only in his later years was he paid a small sum for each play. Of this enormous output no manuscript remains, but several printed plays have been preserved. From leader of a strolling troupe, Hardy returned to Paris and joined the company producing at the Hôtel Bourgogne.

FRENCH THEATERS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

The theater of the Hôtel Bourgogne, one of the best in its day, was badly lighted and had narrow corridors where a motley crowd jostled and scuffled. There mingled students, lackeys, pickpockets, and courtezans. On its stage were produced tragedies, tragicomedies, and the popular farce. Up to 1625 the name of the author never appeared upon the bill.

In 1628 women appeared in the cast, and the morale of the companies improved. Before that time the prologues had been coarse and often obscene. Something approaching realism was introduced into stage scenery in this period—doors that opened and shut, and the use of curtains to suggest shifting of scenes. If a company was sufficiently prosperous it carried its own poet or playwright; if not, it used old plays. An orchestra of flute, drum, and several violins furnished music between scenes. The play over, a song full of the coarsest jests closed the performance.

PIERRE CORNEILLE (1606–84)

While France did not experience so great a national impulse of dramatic power as that of ancient Greece or Elizabethan England, yet in the seventeenth century the drama was the most important form of literature, and the three great names of the seventeenth century are Corneille, Racine, and Molière.

Notwithstanding the work of an experimental nature which had gone before, Corneille is named Creator of the French Drama. Jodelle's tragedies seemed more scholarly to many of Corneille's contemporaries, but in spite of the condemnation of the Academy the people of Paris clung to *Le Cid*, and "beautiful as the Cid" became a French proverb. To fix Corneille in point of time, he was six years of age when the bard of Avon left London and the stage forever; and Shakespeare had been dead twenty-five years when the masterpiece *Le Cid* was produced. Calderón, who was born at the high tide of Shakespeare's activity, at the turn of the century, was at the height of his powers. But *Le Cid* was not Corneille's first effort. He had tried his hand at a comedy and a tragedy; he had tried unsuccessfully to practise law. Only after eight mediocre efforts did he rise to the heights of *Le Cid*.

The masterpiece of Corneille was condemned by the Academy because it violated the ancient traditions and was too romantic in treatment. His proud and sensitive soul found

many sorrows and few rewards along his way. After two more defeats he was finally crowned an Immortal in the Academy, but he lived to see his fame surpassed by Racine, and he died neglected and forgotten—Corneille who had once been the pride of gay Paris! creator of the beautiful *Le Cid*!

The works of Corneille represent most ably the French classical tragedy; they excel in beauty of versification and lofty characters. *Le Cid* and *Polyeucte* are most often read to-day.

STUDY OF *Polyeucte*

The setting of *Polyeucte* is in the capital of Armenia, and the time is the period of persecution of the Christians. The theme is, primarily, the steadfastness of a woman's honor, her loyalty to her marriage vows and subjugation of love to reason and right. In Pauline we have the noblest of Corneille's women, who holds "shame the only grief without redress." In both *Polyeucte* and *Severus* we have the same lofty heroism which holds love and life second to honor. The play gives opportunity for appreciation of the devotion of the early Christians:

I know the breed; I know their courage high,
They love the cross,—so, for the cross they die.
We see two stakes of wood, the felon's shame,
They see a halo round one matchless Name.
To powers of earth, and hell, and torture blind,
In death for Him they love, they rapture find.
They joy in agony,—our gain their loss,
To die for Christ they count the world but dross:
Our rack their crown, our pain their highest pleasure,
And in the world's contempt they find their treasure.
Their cherished heritage is—martyrdom!

One effect of the observance of the dramatic unities which this play exemplifies is to give great importance to the speeches and opportunity for heroic declamation. There can be little action; the story progresses through the recitals of the various characters.

Pauline, in obedience to her father's will, marries Poly-eucte, although she loves Severus, a Roman knight. Poly-eucte embraces the Christian faith and in a frenzy of religious zeal destroys the altars of the Roman gods. This is an offense punishable with death. Pauline, while she detests the impious sect, never wavers in her devotion to her husband.

Let Duty still be queen! Yea, let her break
The heart she pierces, yet can never shake.

When the condemned Polyeucte places her hand in that of Severus, with constancy unshaken she cries:

Let fate—Severus—passion all combine
Against him!—I am his, and he is mine.
Yes, mine to guide, lead, win, forgive, and save!
I seek his honour tho' he court the grave.

With sweet dignity she declares "that which I gave I take not back again." The vacillating character of Felix, coolly calculating on the main chance, is not much improved by his avowal of conversion to the Christian faith at the close. He is an example in life of the line, "The slaves of fear themselves alone enslave." Pauline is faithful unto death and beyond, embracing her husband's faith and renouncing earth's ties that she may be one with him in Christ. Noble Severus muses:

We slay them; yet like Cadmus' seed, new-born
They sprout afresh, and laugh our scythe to scorn.
We mow them down fresh nurslings to unbare,
What moves the seed lies hid, but *it is there!*

This play should be studied from three points of view: its characterization; its dramatic structure, so similar to the ancient tragedy; and its lofty versification.

JEAN BAPTISTE RACINE (1639-99)

Racine, the second of the classic tragedians of France, was born three years after the triumph of the *Cid*; but he com-

menced writing twenty years before the death of Corneille, and his early work is imitative of his predecessor. He did not attempt to modify the conventions as established by Corneille, submitting willingly to the simplicity of structure which marked the Greek tragedies. But in manner of treatment there is a great difference. The characters of Corneille subdue passion by force of will, as in *Pauline* and *Severus*; the characters of Racine are driven helplessly by their passion. Corneille's characters speak in a more exalted strain, but those of Racine are more human. Corneille was more severe, Racine more sympathetic; as the French were wont to say, "*Le grand Corneille, le tendre Racine.*" Racine was more successful in his portraits of women than his older contemporary.

Racine first attracted attention by his ode on the occasion of the marriage of Louis XIV, in 1660; and his first great dramatic success was *Andromaque*. His greatest tragedies are *Britannicus*, *Bérénice*, *Bejazyet*, *Mithridate*, *Iphigénie*, and *Phèdre*.

But poets in those days flourished or declined under the patronage of the great. The king frowned, and Racine's pen was still. In his disappointment he contemplated entering a Carthusian monastery. But Madame Maintenon wanted a play, without the inevitable love-theme, for the young ladies of St.-Cyr, and asked Racine to write it for her. In response he created his two Biblical pieces, *Esther* and *Athalie*. Racine also wrote one comedy, *The Pleaders*.

The names of these great rivals in French letters would have been sufficient to make a literary epoch; but another dramatist, with no rival in his particular field, was to make still more memorable the golden age of French literature.

STUDY OF *Phèdre*

No greater contrast in womanhood could be found than the characters of *Pauline* in Corneille's tragedy and that of *Phèdre* in Racine's creation. *Phèdre*'s guilty love for the

son of her husband was treated by Euripides, but Racine has added certain bits to the old legend. He has enlarged the characterization of the nurse and added the love of Hippolytus for Aricia. There is a strong fatalism running through the play as in the ancient Greek themes. His tutor advises Hippolytus:

The gods, dear prince, if once your hour is come,
Care little for the reasons that should guide us.

And unhappy Phèdre excuses her own weakness:

The gods will bear me witness,
Who have within my veins kindled this fire,
The gods, who take a barbarous delight
In leading a poor mortal's heart astray.

In the end, by the action of the gods, Hippolytus is destroyed. It is a blind web of disastrous circumstance from which there is no escape for the innocent victims of mortal passion and immortal vengeance. All of the Greek mechanism of plot is used, even to the *deus ex machina* of Euripides in the final scene.

It is with the swift disintegration of character in Phèdre that we are most concerned. In the opening pages the unholy passion which she conceals from all, even her faithful old nurse, is consuming her physical strength. She allows her mind to feed secretly upon her love for Hippolytus; she has been untrue to her husband in thought but not in deed. With the declaration of her passion and the hope of gratification she becomes transformed into a jealous fury, allowing Hippolytus to go to his death under a false accusation. Much of human frailty is in Phèdre. Had she not heard of the love of Hippolytus for another, she might have confessed her wrong and saved him, but "hell has no fury like a woman scorned." Note how vividly the final tragedy is depicted in the story of the tutor, Theramenes.

JEAN BAPTISTE POQUELIN (MOLIÈRE) (1622-73)

Molière, as he is best known from the stage-name which he adopted, stands without a rival at the head of French comedy. His influence upon the English stage has been very great. Professor Brander Matthews declares that the influence of Molière upon English comedy since the Restoration has been far greater than that of Shakespeare. Molière began to write a half-century after Shakespeare became silent, and in that half-century drama had gone far. The difference between the theater of Shakespeare's day and that of modern times is very great, but the difference between the theater of Molière and that of to-day is insignificant. With Molière we have the beginning of the modern.

The life of the great dramatist was given to his art. He was playwright, actor, director, and manager. On the whole he was well received, but naturally his satire awakened hostility, and he was the object of many bitter attacks and much slander. He exposed the follies and vices of his day without mercy and satirized contemporary manners and affectations in his brilliant series of comedies, *The School for Wives*, *The School for Husbands*; *The Misanthrope*, in which the character of Alceste is said to reveal Molière as Hamlet reveals Shakespeare; *The Hypocrite*, (*Tartuffe*), which aroused such a storm of protest from the religious world; *Learned Ladies*; *Doctor in Spite of Himself*; etc. His comedies are mostly written in verse and are a combination of the comedy of character and manners. In the creation of his universal types of human nature there is a distinct development of the abstractions of the moralities.

Louis XIV was a youth of twenty when Molière returned from his tour of the provinces to Paris, and two years later he appeared under the patronage of the young king at the Palais Royal. A picture of the condition of the drama in the time of Richelieu is found in *Cyrano de Bergerac*, where the disappointed tragedian is driven from the stage

Molière was much indebted to both the Italians and the Spaniards and through him that influence was later transmitted to English drama. When a mere boy he was taken by his grandfather to the Hôtel Bourgogne and there saw a number of farces, among them the famous fifteenth-century *Patelin*, which was the forefather of *Tartuffe*.

Many of his comedies are directed against the practices of ignorant leeches and apothecaries, and it was during the performance of his latest masterpiece, *Imaginary Illness*, that he was taken with a hemorrhage from which he died a few hours later. He concealed his illness from the audience and went on with the play in which he was acting.

Molière was not a moralist; he was not a reformer; he portrayed life as he saw it, relentlessly and brilliantly, and he was the worthy successor of the great English master of laughter and tears.

Individual reading of the three great comedies, *The Misanthrope*, *The Hypocrite*, and *Doctor in Spite of Himself*, is suggested. For group work the study of *The Hypocrite* or the production of *Doctor in Spite of Himself* is recommended.

STUDY OF *Tartuffe* (The Hypocrite)

It seems a little strange that there should have been such a storm about the creation of *Tartuffe*, the hypocrite, who ingratiated himself into the household to destroy its peace and happiness. There is nowhere an accusation of true piety but only of the pretense worn as a cloak for rascality.

Tartuffe is befriended by Orgon and made an inmate of his family, where all the members see through his oily hypocrisy except his benefactor and the mother, Madame Pernelle. The character of Madame Pernelle, obstinate, ruling her son's home with a high hand, and frank in her criticism of wife and children, is very well drawn. The wily *Tartuffe* estranges Orgon from his own family.

His converse has transformed me quite; he weans
My heart from every friendship, teaches me
To have no love for anything on earth;
And I could see my brother, children, mother,
And wife all die, and never care—a snap.

Cleantes expostulates in vain.

Will you find no difference between
Hypocrisy and genuine devoutness?
Nothing more noble or more beautiful
Than is the holy zeal of true devoutness;
Just so I think there's naught more odious
Than whited sepulchers of outward unction.

The deluded Orgon refuses to believe that Tartuffe is slyly making love to his wife and insists upon marrying him to his young daughter, driving his son from home and deeding the property to the rogue. In desperation the wife bids him hide under the table while she entertains the false friend. With rising indignation he hears Tartuffe declare:

Then, too, with me your honor runs no risk;
With me you need not fear a public scandal.
So, you may find, with hearts like ours sincere,
Love without scandal, pleasure without fear.

Finally he can bear no more, for Tartuffe boldly cries:

He is a man to lead around by the nose.
He's capable of glorying in our meetings;
I've fooled him, he'll see all, and deny it.

Like many another credulous soul, Orgon finds it is not so easy to get rid of the viper he has nursed. But all turns out happily in the end, as comedy should, and Cleantes moralizes:

Just because a rascal boldly duped you
With pompous show of false austerity
Must you needs have it everybody's like him,
And no one's truly pious nowadays?
If you can help it, don't uphold imposture;
But do not rail at true devoutness either.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

What was the influence of the medieval mysteries upon French drama?

What writer introduced the classic spirit?

From whom did the strain of Italian comedy come?

Comment upon the work of Alexandre Hardy as a transition to serious drama.

What was the place of the author in early drama?

When did women appear upon the French stage?

Who is entitled Creator of French Drama?

What was the quarrel of Corneille with the Academy?

Who is the most lofty woman character in Corneille's work?

Who superseded Corneille in the applause of Paris?

Contrast Pauline with Phèdre.

Comment upon the influence of Molière in modern drama.

Trace the influence of the moralities in his work.

Is true piety anywhere held in contempt in *The Hypocrite*?

Compare *The Hypocrite* with *Hell Bent For Heaven*.

REFERENCES FOR READING

A short History of French Literature, George Saintsbury (Clarendon Press).

Development of the Drama, Brander Matthews (Charles Scribner's Sons).

Polyeucte, Corneille, in *Harvard Classics* and other editions.

Phèdre, Racine, in *Harvard Classics* and other editions.

Tartuffe, or *The Hypocrite*, Molière, in *Harvard Classics* and other editions.

PLAYS OF THE PERIOD THAT MAY BE PRODUCED

The Affected Young Ladies, Molière (French), three men, six women.

Doctor in Spite of Himself, Molière (French), six men, three women.

The Merchant Gentleman, Molière (French), nine men, five women.

III

EARLY GERMAN DRAMA: LESSING, GOETHE, SCHILLER

One who comes back even from an unsuccessful wrestle with the *Divine Comedy* or the second part of Goethe's *Faust* will find whole acres of modern literature no longer tempting to him; he has grown past their need and service.

—Edward Howard Griggs

We must be careful to see that the natural prejudice which recent events have created, or emphasized, in our minds against German schools of thought does not extend to depriving us of the incomparable privilege of sunning ourselves in the broad light of Goethe.

—Edmund Gosse

RISE OF THE DRAMA IN GERMANY

THE German was the last of the literatures of Europe to have its golden age. In quick succession Italy, England, Spain, and France threw off the shackles of medievalism and burst forth in a great national expression. Italy led the way with her rediscovery of the treasures of Greek art and letters; Spain followed with domination of religion and politics of Europe as well as letters; England threw off the yoke of Spain and in turn assumed leadership. Then France carried on the work which the English had begun of exalting human reason in religion, politics, and letters.

The German essayist Karl Hillebrand says, "Thus then in letters and thought we see in successive sway over Europe Italian humanism giving way to Spanish dogmatism, this enforcement of tradition and authority yielding to English empiricism, and the latter breaking down its practical limits and merging into French rationalism."

That the great creative impulse came to Germany so late

is probably due to the Thirty Years' War with its depression and impoverishment. Not until 1750 did the nation possess sufficient material strength to give impetus to her great creative impulse which is known as the Golden Age.

By the time Germany was ready to take her turn in leadership of letters, the period of experimentation was over, dramatic forms were established, and a rich literature had grown up in Europe, comparable in form and content with the Golden Age of Greece. Upon this rich store Goethe drew freely, and he frankly acknowledged his indebtedness.

Germany's day had come, and her great names were not wanting. Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller were ready to "carry on."

GOTTHOLD EPHRAIM LESSING (1729-81)

While thou wast living we honored thee as one of the gods:
Now thou art dead thy spirit over our spirit presides.

In these words Goethe honored the memory of Lessing, who wrote the first German national comedy and the first serious drama. Lessing's nature was not romantic but calmly critical, and he laid the foundations of literary criticism in his country with his sane inquiry into artistic principles. There was nothing of mysticism in his philosophy; in all things he was subject to logic and reason.

Lessing was attracted to the Faust legend and left a few fragments that testify to the strength of his conception, which is a defense of rationalism.

Lessing was the son of a Lutheran minister, was educated at Leipsic, and fell under the influence of Voltaire, whom he met in Berlin. One of his early efforts, *Miss Sara Sampson*, is a modern version of the old story of Medea and was the forerunner of many a sentimental middle-class German play. While connected with the national theater of Hamburg as critic, Lessing wrote much of the valuable literary criticism for which he is famed.

In an early work on the Jew a broad tolerance for a de-

spised race was foreshadowed which later bore fruit in the drama of *Nathan the Wise*. The character of Nathan was taken from one of his friends, whose nobility and benevolence excited Lessing's admiration. The comedy of *Minna von Barnhelm* is a national military drama in which the soldier lover typifies German courage, and his sweetheart Minna the best of German womanhood. These two plays are the best examples of Lessing's dramatic art.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE (1749-1832)

I owe much to the Greeks and the French; I am infinitely indebted to Shakespeare, Sterne, and Goldsmith.

In these words the greatest of German men of letters acknowledges his debt to his predecessors. He once said modestly to a friend, "After all there are honest people going up and down the world who have got light from my books, and whoever reads them and gives himself the trouble to understand me will acknowledge that he has acquired hence a certain inward freedom."

Of the details of his life we care little, of the education at Leipsic and Strassburg, the residence in Frankfurt and Weimar, the two years in Italy, and the associations he formed, happily or unhappily, with women; the depth of his criticism of life as revealed through his work is to the student the vital thing.

Goethe's only rival in German poetry is Schiller; the two poets were inseparably linked in friendship in life, and they sleep side by side. In the square of Weimar stand two statues, holding a laurel wreath between them. As Goethe once said, "Instead of arguing as to which of us is the greater, the Germans should be proud that they have two such men." Schiller was more tender and human, Goethe more universal. Unlike most literary men, Goethe knew the sweetness of public honors, esteem, and glory in his lifetime. Rarely has a man of letters had so full and rich a life and such a many-sided activity. His political and scientific la-

bors would have made him a great name in his age without his dramatic career. Lyrics, novels, epic poems, all came from his pen with strength sufficient to mark him as a master, yet it is by the creation of *Faust* that he holds his supremacy in the Golden Age of German literature.

The following comparison of Goethe with Shakespeare may be found in the *Outline of Literature*:

Goethe, without being a Shakespeare, was cast in that mighty mould which we must call Shakespearean. He fell short of Shakespeare and he was different from Shakespeare, who was so to speak a "ninth wave" breaking on our Elizabethan shores with the momentum of great seas behind him, whereas Goethe was virtually a first wave unsupported and unimpelled by tradition and racial inspiration. Shakespeare crowned English literature. Goethe founded German literature. No Chaucer, no Spenser behind *him*; no long speech of his race; no great companions such as Shakespeare had; no air of poetry and national expression such as Shakespeare breathed. Naked, Goethe came into German literature; clothed in purple and fine linen of his own weaving he went out.

In the last year of his life the great poet explained why he had never written war-songs in words that might have been uttered by a leader in the hosts of peace to-day:

How could I write songs of hatred without hating? Altogether national hatred is something peculiar. You will always find it strongest and most violent where there is the lowest degree of culture. But there is a degree where it vanishes altogether, and where one stands to a certain extent *above* nations, and feels the weal or woe of a neighbouring people, as if it had happened to one's own. This degree of culture was comfortable to my nature, and I had become strengthened in it long before I reached my sixtieth year.

STUDY OF *Faust*

The *Faust* of Goethe embodies more fully the spirit of the time than anything before it except the *Divine Comedy*. It was the labor of sixty years, containing the vision of youth and the ripe experience of age. It contains Goethe's whole philosophy. If, as he declared, his works are one long con-

fession, then *Faust* is its supreme moment. Goethe's life he regarded as an art, and he was willing that men should see its intricate design and profit by his experience. The independence of youth, the discontent of young manhood, and the final readjustment to life are all revealed in the character of Faust, with its blended strength and weakness. The first part of *Faust* was given to the public in 1790; the second part was not published until after the poet's death.

The Faust Legend is the old and widespread one of the man who sold his soul to the devil. The Dr. Faust of history traveled about Germany early in the sixteenth century, practising magic, fortune-telling, and healing. When he died mysteriously the story became current that the devil had carried him off. In 1587 a life of Dr. Faust appeared, and it was followed by others, leaving nothing out of the original story and adding bit by bit to the supernatural element. Strangely enough the story was translated into English and dramatized by Marlowe, was brought back by English players into Germany, and degenerated into a puppet-show; it was this rude representation of Marlowe's treatment of a national legend that awakened Goethe's interest. Goethe was not quite twenty when the theme attracted him which was to lose its interest only with his death. Of the fascination it had for him Goethe says: "The significant puppet-play legend echoed and buzzed in many tones within me. I, too, had drifted about in all knowledge, and early enough had been brought to feel the vanity of it. I, too, had made all sorts of experiments in life, and had always come back more unsatisfied and more tormented. I was now carrying these things, like many others, about with me, and delighting myself with them in lonely hours, but without writing anything down." *Faust* does not conform to the traditional standards of what a tragedy should be. Goethe himself referred to it cynically as a monstrosity.

There are many ways of approach to the study of *Faust*. One may read it as a masterpiece of literature, utterly apart from Goethe's life and times; or one may trace in it the

autobiographical interest and the reflection of the unrest of the age. Again, it may be read as an exposition of the problems of humanity, just as Job is an exposition of the conflict of a human soul; and in this sense it is greatest because of no day or particular person but as belonging to the great universal themes of the world.

The theme of *Faust* is the persistent seeking of the ideal, through the temptation to find satisfaction in the senses. Suggestive symbolism obscures the second part. The first part, with its realism and youthful yielding to romanticism, its acceptance of the wildest elements of the supernatural, ranks it as great drama. The second part with its shadowy symbolism and brooding upon the mystery of life has the universal appeal which allies it to the *Divine Comedy*, *Job*, and *Prometheus*. Goethe did not hesitate to borrow very frankly from his predecessors. The prologue in Heaven is an echo of the prologue to the Book of Job. The reader should compare the two and especially note the distinction in the character of Satan, whom the author of Job names the Adversary and Goethe calls Mephistopheles. The Adversary represents mere negation and doubt; Mephistopheles is an agent of destruction. Another frank borrowing is the song of Mephistopheles, taken literally from Shakespeare. "Why, indeed," says Goethe, "should I trouble to write another when this said just what is wanted?"

Faust introduces us to a world of introspection, of shadowy symbols and fading thought-forms. Faust's hunger was for the whole of life, and he found himself unable to meet humanity on a common ground. In his loneliness and isolation from men he lives in a world of his own making.

Alas! that when on spirit-wing we rise,
No wing material lifts our mortal clay.

The peaceful spirit of Wagner cannot understand the strange flights of his friend.

Their wings I envy not the feathered kind;
Far otherwise the pleasures of the mind,

Bear us from book to book, from page to page!
 Ah, when we unroll
 Some old and precious parchment, at the sight
 All heaven itself descends upon the soul.
 Gray eve doth all things blend,
 The air grows chill, the mists descend!
 'Tis in the evening that our home we prize—
 Why stand you thus and gaze with wondering eyes?

Contentment has gone from the soul of Faust:

The god, who throned within my breast resides,
 Deep in my soul can stir the springs;
 With sovereign sway my energies he guides,
 He cannot move external things;
 And so existence is to me a weight.
 Death fondly I desire and life I hate.

He realizes that by study he can never raise himself one hair's-breadth nearer to the infinite, but only through knowing life in its fullness.

The end I aim at is not joy;
 I crave excitement, agonizing bliss,
 Enamoured hatred, quickening vexation.
 To bare my breast to every pang—to know
 In my heart's core all human weal and woe.

Along with the wild supernaturalism of Part One there are striking realistic touches: we have the Witches' Kitchen and Walpurgis Night; we have also Auerbach's cellar and the character of Martha.

The belief that Faust's longing for fullness of life and knowledge was a sinful thing to be punished by a just God was common in Goethe's day, and his sympathetic treatment of his hero was quite in advance of his time. Compare the ending of Marlowe's earlier play. In modern thought our sympathies are all with the searching soul, and we feel that he must inevitably struggle up through darkness to the light. We know that the tempter cannot succeed, since God is God and truth is truth.

Faust strides on from experience to experience, from task to task, expiating guilt by doing; losing himself, and finding himself again. Blinded he feels a new light kindled within; dying, he gazes far into the future. And even in the heavenly regions he goes on ever changing into new and higher and finer forms. It is this irresistible spirit of striving which makes Goethe's *Faust* the Bible of modern humanity.

From the *Faust Legend*

—Professor Kuno Francke

QUESTIONS ON THE DRAMA

What is the object of introducing Faust to the “witless content” of Auerbach’s cellar?

What is the purpose of the Witches’ Kitchen scene?

In what sense has *Faust* been called the Bible of modern humanity?

What did Goethe borrow from the Book of Job? From Shakespeare?

Did Mephistopheles give life to Faust in the sense that he asked?

Was Margaret’s grief remorse or moral panic?

Did the church afford her the comfort that it might have done?

What is the significance of Helen in Part Two?

Did Faust finally win redemption through service?

Who won the wager, Faust or Mephistopheles?

JOHANN CHRISTOPH FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER

(1759–1805)

Schiller, whose father was a surgeon and soldier, was educated with a view to the church. He tried the study of law and medicine, but his literary tastes were continually seeking expression. His revolutionary drama, *The Robbers*, brought the displeasure of the duke, under whose patronage he lived, upon him; and he fled from the duchy and, from various retreats, went on with his literary work. He was dramatist, lyric poet, historian, critic, and philosopher. The key note of his career is liberty, passionate protest against the conflict

of personality with law, the strife of the individual against civilization. He indicted the tyranny of princes and the selfishness of the higher classes.

The last six years of Schiller's life were made memorable by the beautiful friendship of Goethe, beside whom he lived in Weimar. This little city became the literary capital, the Athens of Germany, through the work of these two illustrious men.

Schiller's life was in itself a drama, a continual conflict of his spirit against the mesh of circumstance, a continual longing for the personal freedom which he could not find. Nowhere is his love of liberty more strongly shown than in his latest serious drama, *Wilhelm Tell*; it is like a trumpet-call.

Some of Schiller's greatest dramatic works are his *Wallenstein*, *Marie Stuart*, *The Maid of Orleans*, *The Bride of Messina*, and *The Robbers*; but *Wilhelm Tell* still continues to be the most popular. It is Schiller's only drama with a happy ending. It is significant that the last work of the poet was a lyrical play entitled *Homage of the Arts*, an allegory setting forth the mission of the arts in exalting and ennobling life.

Every student of the development of the drama who is unfamiliar with *Wilhelm Tell* will wish to know it before passing on, but since it is so familiar and accessible no detailed study will be given here.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

What was the contribution of Lessing to German drama?

What is the key note of Schiller's plays?

What circumstances of his life contributed to his passion for liberty?

Comment upon the friendship of Goethe and Schiller.

What was the relation of Goethe's life to his work?

Of what modern attitude is the character of Mephistopheles typical?

Was Faust's desire for fullness of life a reprehensible thing?

Compare the mysticism of Goethe's treatment with the magic of Marlowe.

Compare Margaret with Shakespeare's women, notably Imogen.

How did Goethe come in contact with the Faust legend?

Why was the dramatic impulse of Germany delayed so long?

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THE CLOSING CHORAL ODE

ENGLISH TRANSITIONS

He who serves his dramatic meal, cooked and seasoned exactly for what he takes to be the tastes of his public, merely writes plays: he does not create drama.

—Professor George Pierce Baker

THE third and last great dramatic episode, enacted upon the Continent, is over. It has carried us in point of time well through the eighteenth century; and now, to preserve the unity of the dramatic movement, the chorus returns to tell us in final recital what is taking place in distant places of significance to the plot.

It carries us back to the shores of England, which we left when the curtain dropped upon the last of the Elizabethans, and traces briefly the transition from the Renaissance through Classicism to Revolution, and there it leaves us to form our own conclusions.

JOHN MILTON: THE TRANSITION BETWEEN RENAISSANCE
AND CLASSICISM (1608-74)

Milton was eight years of age when Shakespeare died, but the dynamic impulse of the Elizabethan Age did not decline definitely until fourteen years before Milton's death. But English life and letters saw many and startling changes during that brief period.

Puritan austerity closed the English theaters in 1642, and from that date until the Restoration in 1660 England was dominated by the spirit of religious fanaticism known as the Puritan Age. Actors were publicly whipped; poetic festivals were forbidden; painting and sculpture were pronounced idolatrous. For sixteen years, English dramatic

expression was limited to the rude farces called "drolls" to avoid the forbidden name of "plays." These were given by strolling players at country fairs, not always safely; sometimes the company was hustled unceremoniously to jail. These drolls were parts of old plays, and a popular one was *Bottom, the Weaver* from *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Whatever slender thread of continuity exists between the Elizabethan drama and the revival of Classicism after the Restoration was supplied by the work of Milton. Devoted to the Puritan cause with all his strength, he abandoned letters as an art and took up the work of a religious propagandist. Milton's life is a drama in itself, divided into three acts. In the placid period of his youth he created the great poems, *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Comus*, and *Lycidas*. It is a period reflecting the radiance of the Renaissance. In the second period he was dominated by party passion and religious zeal; to this period belong the prose pamphlets. To the third period of loneliness and blindness belong the immortal epics and the tragedy, *Samson Agonistes*.

In the study of the development of the drama we are interested only with the *Masque of Comus*, which is the finest illustration of its form in the English language, and with the tragedy, *Samson Agonistes*. In the latter the rules of Greek tragedy were followed rigidly, and the pathos of the author's personal affliction permeates the plot. The work was made more famous in the eighteenth century by the adaptation of its theme to his oratorio by Handel.

Individual reading of the *Masque of Comus*, or, better, production, is recommended, and also the reading of *Samson Agonistes*, with supplementary study of the oratorio, *Samson and Delilah*.

JOHN DRYDEN, LEADER OF THE ERA OF CLASSICISM
(1631-1700)

Although Dryden was just coming to the fullness of his powers when Charles II was restored to the English throne, and died in the very year that marked the close of the

Restoration Period, yet his name is not identified so much with the drama of that period as with the school to which he belonged. It may help to remember that the Classic Era of English letters extended over nearly a century, embracing the briefer period of the Restoration. The Classic Age refers to a school, the Restoration Period to a definite point of time. It may help, also, to remember that Dryden and Molière were contemporary and that Calderón, the last brilliant Spanish dramatist of the first national episode, did not die until 1681. Although taken up for convenience earlier in the study, they are contemporary with the English transitions. The Classic School was not, therefore, a characteristic English expression but dominated the drama of France for two centuries.

John Dryden was the first great leader of the Classic movement in English letters and a dominating influence for many years, excelling in many forms, in some more notably than in the drama. He left nearly thirty tragedies and comedies, which are masterpieces of dramatic rhetoric. He substituted the heroic couplet for the blank verse of the Elizabethans. The poet's ear must ever delight in the sweep of his rhythmic lines, though the critic may assail his artificial idealism of characterization and his improbability of plot. The tragedies should be read aloud to realize the "sound and fury" of the lines.

Dryden employed the device known to the modern playwright and novelist as romantic escape. While he followed the classic models and frequently employed a historic background, by placing his setting in an unknown country, among mythical peoples, he escaped the bondage of the probable and could exercise an artificial idealism in which he delighted. To-day the same thing is accomplished by weaving the plot in the South Sea Islands.

A good example, and an accessible one, of Dryden's work is *The Conquest of Granada*, a tragedy with a happy ending where the theme is the conflict between love and honor. Al-

manzor is an epic hero. Compare the treatment with any one of Shakespeare's historic plays. A famous couplet is:

Forgiveness to the injured doth belong,
But they ne'er pardon who have done the wrong.

The Classic Era culminated with the work of Pope, Addison, and Steele. It is characterized by the exaltation of form over matter. Commonplace matter received great applause if clothed in the correct and polished diction which the literary taste of the age demanded. It perfected English prose but was deadly to English drama. It was a literature of aristocracy; nature was ignored and life was ignored, except that limited portion of life which revolved about kings and courts; even here the reflection was but a surface picture and failed to reveal the depths which Shakespeare had uncovered.

For further study of the Classical Age the student may read *Cato* by Joseph Addison, pronounced by Voltaire the first great English tragedy, because it conformed to French rules, and *The Conscious Lovers* by Sir Richard Steele. In the latter play moral idealism is more evident than realism; things are pictured as they ought to be rather than as they are. The main theme is a revolt against the conventional code of honor.

Cato was produced in London many times but is read to-day principally because Addison wrote it. The prologue, written by Pope, is very familiar to modern readers, and it contains many memorable lines such as, "The woman who deliberates is lost," and, "One truth is clear, whatever is, is right."

COMEDY OF THE RESTORATION PERIOD

Charles II was a lover of the theater; and on his restoration to the throne, in 1660, he immediately took steps to encourage play-writing and play-acting, and to build theaters. But it was a different sort of theater that he encouraged. English drama began to decline soon after Shakespeare, and,

although it lingered through Fletcher, Massinger, and Shirley to the Restoration, it had lost its dynamic power. The great Spanish impulse was over; Calderón, the last of the early Spanish dramatists, found scant royal favor and died in poverty; Spain was fast sinking into intellectual darkness. The craze for all things French spread over Europe, and Molière rather than Shakespeare was the pattern for the plays of the Restoration Period. Professor Matthews says: "No one of the English dramatists had Molière's insight into character or his sturdy morality. Congreve and Wycherley, Farquhar and Vanbrugh helped themselves to Molière's framework only to hang it about with dirty linen. Molière had been plain of speech but clean-minded; whereas the English dramatists were often foul of speech and frequently filthy in thought also."

It is the mission of the drama to hold up the mirror to life, but drama is not enduring literature unless it also carries beneath this reflecting surface something universal. Restoration comedy held up its mirror to the sensual court of Charles II and gave back the picture of long days and nights of intrigue, of gallants and ladies who held virtue in contempt and sneered at honor. The soul had departed, and whenever the soul goes out of a literary form the shell passes rapidly to decay. The Restoration comedy is but an incident in the dramatic movement, an incident of disintegration; and its influence upon further development was nil. Extensive reading will give small pleasure and less profit. *The Way of the World* by William Congreve is one of the most characteristic examples of Restoration comedy, with comparatively little of the immorality which has made the type notorious. It gives a picture of a society which in our modern parlance we would call standardized. It is a comedy of manners showing the influence of Molière, and its characterization is typical rather than individual.

So poets oft do in one piece expose
Whole belles-assemblées of coquettes and beaux.

Congreve was extremely popular in his lifetime; he enjoyed the favor of king and court and withdrew from active life early to enjoy ease and luxury such as few writers have known. To his contemporaries he doubtless appeared a greater man than Shakespeare, greater than the blind old Milton with his puritanic notions, greater than Calderón with his mystic dreams and visions. The most we can say of Congreve is that he was more decent than his predecessors. His cleverness in dialogue has seldom been equalled; his plays scintillate with the rapid flashes of wit. *The Double Dealer* shares with *The Way of the World* the result of Congreve's mastery of diction.

CULMINATION OF ENGLISH EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DRAMA
UNDER GOLDSMITH AND SHERIDAN

Only three enduring comedies were produced during the eighteenth century: *She Stoops to Conquer*, by Oliver Goldsmith, who was known also as poet and novelist; and Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *Rivals* and *School for Scandal*. These are frequently presented to-day and are still favorably received.

Goldsmith, like many another dramatist, began his career by tramping about Europe playing his flute. He was educated as a physician but was dependent the most of his life upon the work of his pen and the generosity of his friends. *The Good-Natured Man* was his first attempt at drama. *She Stoops to Conquer* was presented at Covent Garden and scored a triumph; it is rich in rollicking fun.

The story is founded upon an incident in Goldsmith's own life when he was directed to "the best house in town" and allowed to believe that it was an inn until he went to settle his account. This play had a brilliant run of one hundred nights in London. Tony Lumpkin is one of the favorite characters of literature.

Individual reading of the entire play should precede discussion.

It was the success of *The Rivals* which lured Sheridan from his profession of law to the theater. He was manager of the Drury Lane Theater, where success alternated with financial difficulties. Twice he assisted in the rebuilding of this playhouse. In 1780 he entered Parliament and for over thirty years played a distinguished part in politics. He was an earnest advocate of liberal ideas and endeared himself to the American people by his opposition to the war with the colonies. *The School for Scandal* carried the comedy of manners to the highest point it had reached in England. It has had a permanent hold upon the play-reading and play-going public, and some of its characters and scenes added largely to the enduring fame of the English stage. Individual reading of both *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal* is recommended to every serious student of the drama. See a production if possible. These comedies are frequently chosen as class plays by colleges and high schools; and interpretation, although of an amateur character, is of much more value than individual or group reading.

See *Oliver Goldsmith*, a play in three acts by Augustus Thomas, for a charming characterization of this lovable literary man (French).

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Trace the transition of English drama from Shakespeare to the Restoration.

Why is Milton the link between the Renaissance and Classicism?

Discuss the influences of Puritan ideas upon the drama.

What was the outlook for continental drama during the seventeenth century?

Discuss the place of Dryden in English letters.

Read *All for Love* and compare with the *Antony and Cleopatra* of Shakespeare.

Compare Dryden's treatment of life in *The Conquest of Granada* with Shakespeare.

- What were the distinguishing features of the Classic Age?
 By whom was the classic movement carried to its extreme?
 Estimate the importance of Restoration comedy in the dramatic whole.
- What were the three enduring plays of the eighteenth century?
- What universal qualities have made them permanent in character?
- Contrast the wit of Congreve in *The Way of the World* with that of Goldsmith and Sheridan.

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THE EXODE

LOOKING BACKWARD OVER THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Men have dethroned, by strange new passions stirred,
Creation's greatest power—the *Spoken Word*.

THE FRENCH INFLUENCE

THE significant fact in the development of the drama, outside of Germany, at the opening of the eighteenth century was the prevalence of French influence. The authority of France was supreme in all matters of taste, from the making of a play to the steps of a minuet; France dictated the height of heels and the number of acts in a drama. The ascendancy which France held over the surrounding nations was comparable to that which Greece held over Rome in the early centuries. England's Renaissance had flickered out under the chill breath of Puritan fanaticism; her Restoration comedy was based upon French rather than English traditions; it imitated the form of Molière without his wholesome wit. English scholars apologized for the crudities of the Elizabethans, and when Ben Jonson commended *The Works of William Shakespeare* as enduring literature, he was not without his courage. The rules which Corneille had adopted from the Greek masters were enforced by the authority of Voltaire, who made a distinct contribution to French tragedy in his own right.

Let us see what these rules really were which controlled the drama of France for two centuries, and which were originally formulated by Corneille, and later accepted by Italy, Spain, and England.

They stipulated that a tragedy should have five acts, no

more nor less. It must deal with noble themes, and its characters should be kings, queens, or other noble personages; it must be genteel and decorous, and no unseemly humor or violence was permitted; it must present a single plot and no change of scene. The time-limit was twenty-four hours.

Corneille had chafed under these restrictions, although he believed them essential to dramatic art, but French dramatists introduced something of the Spanish intrigue and surprise into the Greek scheme. They never descended to the broad farce of the English Restoration comedy; they insisted upon gentility.

From Germany, whose drama came to its belated flowering in the eighteenth century, and whose three outstanding figures have been discussed under Continental Drama, came the formidable antagonist of French tradition. Lessing did not hesitate to oppose Voltaire and to stand for that freedom from classicism which was now necessary to a fresh dramatic impulse. Although a most brilliant critic, Lessing was constructive as well as destructive; while pointing out the absurdity of the ancient forms, he created new ones to replace them, and he created well.

We find, then, at the beginning of the century, the influence of France undiminished, although her great names had passed and left no successors that approached their splendor. Beaumarchais, to be sure, in *The Marriage of Figaro* and *The Barber of Seville*, had followed in the footsteps of Molière, but his comedy had disintegrated into biting satire. While Molière had laughed at hypocrisy and humbug, Beaumarchais sneered at the established order of things. There is vast difference in the reaction of these two attitudes upon life, as much of our modern creative work will bear witness. Voltaire, by his supremacy over European letters, gave authority to the traditions of France for a time, but her creative impulse was over. The brilliant age of Louis XIV passed and left an empty form which hardened and then disintegrated; the spirit which had made it once a living thing had gone out of it.

RELIGIOUS SKEPTICISM

During the first half of the century English letters exalted form over matter, perfected form with slight regard for substance, and helped to build up a literature of aristocracy which it took two revolutions—those of the American colonies and of France—to break down.

In England the Puritan fanaticism which had colored the life of the seventeenth century gave way, under the Restoration, to the boldest immorality; but not until the eighteenth century did the revolt against puritanic thought permeate all metaphysical speculation. Disbelief in the Christian revelation, with a purely rationalistic interpretation of the Scriptures, reigned everywhere from the court drawing-rooms to the coffee-houses. When Voltaire, fresh from free-thinking Paris, visited England in 1726, he was astonished at the bold speculation he found in religious matters.

The religious sentiment of the seventeenth century was replaced in the eighteenth by avowed skepticism. Bold free-thinkers promulgated their dangerous doctrines at sumptuous dinners, while the murmur of starving peasants grew louder, until beside the guillotine Madame Defarge counted her stitches to the tune of dropping heads. And this, the most dramatic event of the eighteenth century, was given to the world later in the form of a novel. Drama as a medium of national expression was, to all appearances, dead.

INFLUENCE OF THE COFFEE-HOUSES

It will be a most interesting digression to study the relation of the coffee-houses of the eighteenth century to politics and letters. We shall find many of our popular dramatists gathered about these festive tables, where, until the middle of the seventeenth century, beer and ale were served; at that time coffee became the popular beverage. It was ale that Marlowe, Greene, Ben Jonson, and Shakespeare sipped at The Mermaid, but coffee satisfied the taste of Dryden and his

coterie at Will's Coffee-House, where the great man reigned supreme; and happy was that aspiring poet who was offered a pinch from Dryden's snuff-box. A stranger visiting London did not ask where a great man lived but what coffee-house he frequented. Addison and Steele affected Button's, and Goldsmith was most often found at the St. James, while the popular Congreve planned his coarser sallies in the smoke-dimmed rooms of the Kit-Kat.

ENGLISH INFLUENCE OVER EUROPEAN LETTERS

The eighteenth century was significant in Italy for the reform of the Italian stage under Goldini, the culmination of Italian tragedy under Alfieri, and the creation of modern Italian opera under Metastasio. The first English opera was written in 1728, *The Beggar's Opera* by John Gay. During the reigns of the Georges, England, for the first time, began to exercise an intellectual and moral sway over Europe. Voltaire carried back from his visit with Bolingbroke many impressions of English freedom and freshness. The world learned for the first time that there was an English literature. Foreigners visited England and learned the language. English drama became accessible to all Europe; men wept with Lear and laughed with Lady Teazle. Literature was fast becoming cosmopolitan; the Italian, Alfieri, dedicated one of his tragedies to the colonial hero, George Washington.

The chorus has finished its recital and passed from the stage. The exodus is finished and the curtain falls.

This *Drama of the Drama*, which has covered in its three great episodes and choral interludes more than twenty centuries, is over, but since it was the custom of the day we must allow the author to have his epilogue spoken before we become restless and turn away. His lines are spoken from the point of view of the close of the eighteenth century, with no knowledge of that which is to come after. In the light of

the many absurdities that have been perpetrated upon the reading public as prophetic criticism in later years, one may forgive our eighteenth-century prophet if he errs somewhat in his conclusions. For him there were no nineteenth and twentieth centuries; his face was turned toward the past with its departed glories.

THE EPILOGUE

LAMENT FOR THE TRAGIC MUSE

A manual for the use of schools, reprinted as late as 1893, contains the text of the epilogue:

Genuine English drama may be said to have closed with Sheridan. To be sure Byron, Coleridge, and Joanna Baillie produced tragedies of literary merit in the early part of the next century, and at the present time there is evidence of rising dramatic genius in England, but none of the productions have been successful as theatrical performances. From the time of Sheridan, English drama disappeared from the stage, and for the most part is to be found only in books.

You who have followed faithfully with me
The tragic Muse, born by Ægean Sea,
Through devious paths and strange diversities
With her three maids, the sacred Unities—
For whom men strove through many a weary age,
For whom they blotted many a written page,—
Until she reigned, at last, on northern shore,
Lament with me—that fair one is no more!

Drama is dead. The high sweet strain
From Avon ne'er shall sound again.
Enamored of new forms, the old give way,
Heroes and gods have feet of common clay.
No more the pits of England and of France
With joyous tumult greet the actor's glance;
With pipe and slippers by the ingle-nooks
Dull scholars pore o'er duller books.
Men have dethroned, by strange new passions stirred,
Creation's greatest power—the *Spoken Word*.

PART TWO

MODERN MOVEMENTS

It is not well for us, like Lot's wife, to keep our faces fixed towards the old dwellings and the former ways. The cultivation of admiration exclusively for what is fine in the past, and the desire to reproduce only classic models may blind us to beauty in strange new forms.

—*The Passing of the Old*, Edgar White Burrill, *The Drama*.

INTRODUCTORY

THE SCOPE AND PLAN OF PART TWO

WE were able, from the vantage-point of the twentieth century, to view the widely separated movements of the past in their relation to the whole, to pass over long periods of comparatively unimportant production, and to focus our attention upon the great impulses of the drama, which were only three if the continental drama be counted as a single expression, or five at the most, if we choose to consider the national expression of Spain, France, and Germany as distinct episodes. We were able to separate from each episode three outstanding names, making the visualization of the whole, as a drama in itself covering more than twenty centuries, a comparatively simple matter. Then the curtain dropped at the close of the eighteenth century, and the play was over. Before the nineteenth century closed careful observers saw signs of a new birth of the dramatic art, and we are now concerned with the second play in this trilogy of the ages, of which the third remains to be written. It may come swiftly or may require centuries in the unfolding, and its importance can only be estimated in retrospect. That which we name Modern Drama to-day will be past tradition to-morrow. It is living stuff which we are seeking to classify, and our way is attended with difficulties. If we choose to date the modern from the work of Ibsen, as is usually done, then, in point of time, Part Two is limited to less than a century; but we are obliged to extend our consideration over more pages than were necessary to survey the work of twenty centuries. We are too close for a proper perspective; we dare not ignore certain impulses as unimportant. Future judgment may place the movements, which we are treating as separate episodes or acts, as parts in one creative impulse,

laying the foundations for others still more vital. In estimating men and movements, the writer has read many opinions and seeks to arrive at a fair average.

We are no longer able to follow either chronological or national lines strictly. Certain phases of modern drama have developed almost simultaneously in several countries, and have often brought together men widely separated in point of time. Drama is becoming cosmopolitan. Broadway sees *The Cherry Orchard*, and *The Hairy Ape* shocks and delights Paris audiences. We may no longer dispose of a movement by calling it French or Spanish, Russian or English, for whatever is new swiftly becomes the property of the world. Whether we select the thread of national expression or that of some modern phase, it is bound to lead us eventually into a maze of interlacing moods.

For the sake of making a few vivid impressions easily retained in the memory, the material of Part Two has been arranged in the form of a modern play of five acts, with a rising and declining action, a climax in the third act, and an indeterminate ending; nothing so antiquated as a chorus will be permitted to help us "carry on":

Overture: A Medley of Nineteenth-Century Moods

- I. Glimpses of the Nineteenth Century
- II. Poetic Drama of the Nineteenth Century

Act One: The Curtain Rises in the Far North

- I. The Scandinavian Theater of Ideas
- II. The Russian Drama

Act Two: In Which France and Germany Play a Part

- I. Modern French Drama
- II. Modern German Drama

Act Three: Rather a Long One, in Which We May Expect a Climax

- I. The English Renaissance
- II. The New Theater of Ireland

Act Four: With a Southern Setting

I. The Spanish Revival

II. Italian Drama

Act Five A Short One with an Indeterminate Ending
Across the Sea—in America

ORIENTAL IMPULSES

The writer is neither overlooking nor ignoring the movements in the East, but the limitations of the present volume will not permit detailed discussion of scattered impulses which have not left any appreciable impression upon the modern movement. There are signs of an awakening in China and Japan, but illustrations are difficult to find and translations often unsatisfactory. The following plays are available for those interested:

The No-Plays of Japan (Alfred A. Knopf).

The Melon-Thief: A Japanese Farce, by Shigayoshi Obata
(The Drama, 1919).

The Razor, One-act modern play dealing with industrial unrest, by Kichizo Nakamura.

The Madman on the Roof, by Kan Kakuchi.

Nara-Kin, a farce, by Yozaan T. Iwasaki.

The last three in one volume with introduction by Glenn Hughes (D. Appleton & Co.).

The Yellow-Jacket, by George C. Hazelton and Benrimo, in the Chinese manner (*Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. II).

The Cow-Herd and the Weaving Maid, by Shen Hung,
(The Drama, August-September, 1921).

Chi-Fu, by William Justema, Jr. (The Drama, August-September, 1923).

For general reference, *The Chinese Drama*, by Kate Bass
(The Four Seas Co.), published 1923.

The Hindu drama culminates in the mystic and symbolic

plays of Rabindranath Tagore, who received the Nobel prize for literature. His plays are published by the Macmillan Company, and the following should be studied and compared with Yeats and Maeterlinck:

Chitra (a feminist theme).

The King of the Dark Chamber (compare Dunsany).

The Post-Office.

An interesting side-excursion may be made into the work of the Yiddish Theater and the drama that is being produced for it. The entire history of the Yiddish drama may be found in *The Drama of Transition* by Isaac Goldberg. An anthology of Yiddish plays, translated by Etta Block, is offered by D. Appleton & Co.

OVERTURE

A MEDLEY OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY MOODS

GLIMPSES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Thus are explained the long impotences and the brilliant successes which appear irregularly and with no apparent reason in the life of a people; the causes of these consist in internal concordances and contrarieties. We may confidently affirm that the unknown creations toward which the current of coming ages is bearing up will spring from and be governed by these primordial forces; that if these forces could be computed we might deduce from them the characters of future civilization.

—*Introduction to History of English Literature*, H. A. Taine

LIFE-CURRENTS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE prophecy pronounced by the speaker of the epilogue, when the curtain dropped upon the eighteenth century seems, with the first quarter of the nineteenth century, fairly on the way toward fulfilment. The drama of the nineteenth century was even less noteworthy than that of the eighteenth, and the principal achievements in a dramatic way were by men who poured their creative genius into impassioned poetry; drama was but a by-product of their art.

The student of the drama may not comprehend, intelligently, the movements of that art within a certain period without also understanding the general trend of letters in that same period; cannot, indeed, comprehend the literature of the period without knowing its history. One must know the life-currents of history to read literature aright; conversely, one must know literature to interpret history aright. The same fundamental laws of creative impulse and subsidence run through letters, art, and music; they run through life itself. Great epochs of national expression do

not come by chance. Monsieur Taine, in his brilliant introduction to the *History of English Literature*, declares that such epochs of creative vigor, followed by periods of sterility, come by internal concordance or contrariety of the great forces of national life. It was the happy concordance of creative forces which produced the golden days of Louis XIV, and it was the secret contrariety of creative forces which produced the abortive drama of the English Restoration.

The serious student of literature can find no more stimulating exercise than the attempt to apply the principle of Monsieur Taine to the great dynamic impulses which have been described in the history of the drama.

One incapable of appreciating the delicate and subtle conclusions of the great French critic cannot fail to observe the rhythmic ebb and flow of life which fills the literary forms and then subsides. The process of development and decadence, of convention and revolt, is the same, whether in past or present, in Europe or America, in art or in letters. It is identical in life and social progress, and briefly it is this: A particular form, whether of government, art, or letters, receives, through the vivifying breath of a great master or masters, a dynamic impulse. The master finishes his work and passes on, leaving the empty form or shell which lesser men seek to fill, but it is a lifeless thing which they seek in vain to reanimate; the spirit has gone out of it. There are two methods of procedure, and they usually take place simultaneously. The revolutionists decry the worthless old shell and go at it with hammer and tongs, raising a great deal of dust in the process of destruction and attracting much attention; two such iconoclasts wielded their weapons in the nineteenth century—Ibsen in the north and Whitman in the new America—but we must not get ahead of our story. The evolutionists look regretfully at the old shell, which was very good in its day, and determine to retain it and build upon it to suit their expanding conscious-

ness; like the chambered nautilus, they go forward, building as they go.

To use another figure, the great clock which ticks off the centuries of social progress sends its swinging pendulum to and fro; it rises to its extreme height, swings back, and gathers momentum for the upward sweep. At the one extreme we have conservatism; at the other, revolt. If it is life at which we are looking, we have traveled all the way, with the swinging pendulum in a succession of oscillations, from aristocracy through democracy to the extreme vibrations of anarchy and bolshevism; if it is art at which we are looking we have gone from the Italian masters through romanticism and realism to the cubists and futurists; if music, we have witnessed the progress from the oratorios and symphonies of the masters of sound to syncopated orchestration; if we are examining the development of drama, the successive swing carries us from Greek tragedy to German expressionism.

Drama and poetry are not the only forms of expression which have strewn the pathway of their development with empty shells; civilization, life itself, presses onward to new beauty over the dead body of its past.

POETRY RULES THE EARLY YEARS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Seeking to apply the law of creative impulse to the conditions of the nineteenth century, we find the early years of that century a time of passionate revolt against forms and traditions; so distinctly a period of revolt that the name "Age of Revolution" characterizes its literary activity. The rising tide of thought which was transforming the social ideas of France and the philosophical ideas of Germany took the form in England of a transformation of letters. Before the century dawned, Robert Burns had breathed his passionate protest against social injustice and his hope of the ultimate triumph of revolutionary principles; he had uttered his prophetic cry and passed:

It's coming yet for a' that,
That man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

Angry revolt against the established order is the message of the Scottish bard; no passive evolutionist was he, but a smasher of idols. From the French Revolution to the death of Shelley, Keats, and Byron, or through the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the medium of English revolt was poetry. English imagination and passion, which had been dormant more than one hundred years, poured forth in poetry. It was an age of "star-bright idealists" storming the gates of heaven with a song.

FOUNDATION OF ENGLISH CRITICISM

Along with the poetic revolution of the early century came a distinct change in literary criticism. Critics, led by Coleridge, discarded the formulas by which they had been accustomed to measure a work of art, much as the tailor applies his yardstick to the cloth. By the fragmentary work of Coleridge the province of English literary criticism was immeasurably enlarged. Critics learned to look beneath the outward form into the life and spirit of the lines. Coleridge doubtless drew many of his ideas from Germany, where we have seen that Lessing threw off the traditional rules and first established freedom of opinion. He was also indebted to Schlegel. For the first time sincere appreciations of the work of Shakespeare began to be written. Coleridge was followed in the field of literary criticism by Macaulay and Carlyle.

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The avowed atheism which had prevailed in France and become popular in England during the last century was now discredited, but orthodoxy was equally impossible. The pantheism of Byron spread to France and was very acceptable there as well as in his own land. On the whole, the

attitude of the age was one of doubt and skepticism; and after the early poetic outburst, which was pantheistic in tone, there is a wavering wistfulness in the literature of the period. Many, like Matthew Arnold, were unable either to accept or reject:

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle curled;
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

It was an age of wistful unrest and desire, rising to passionate plaint in Shelley, to mournful melancholy with Tennyson, and to triumphant victory in Browning.

Science, which deals with physical forces, ruled the day. Darwinism waged conflict with theology. An age which is concerned with scientific investigation does not produce great religionists. An occasional impetus to faith occurred which was significant in its later influence; such was the oratorio of *The Creation* by Haydn at the dawn of the century and the religious movement under the Wesleys in England.

German philosophy, especially that of Schelling, permeated the work of English poets; Goethe influenced the thought of Carlyle; and over across the sea the new doctrine of transcendentalism under Emerson took root on American soil.

In France the extent to which religious skepticism and despair had infected literature, is shown by the work of the poet-dramatist Alfred de Musset, who echoes the unrest of Goethe and the melancholy of Byron. The following lines are from *Rolla*:

Sleep you content, Voltaire, and does your hideous smile
Flit o'er your fleshless skull in mockery the while?
Your century was too young to read you, so they say;
Our own must please you well—your men are born to-day!

Once more lies Lazarus—ah, who will raise him now!
What profits it to-day that moved by heavenly zeal,
Clad in his rags, St. Paul did to old Rome appeal?
Where now the perfumes rare of fallen Magdalene;
Where now the heavenly voice, once heard of doubting men;
About whose head plays now the fiery aureole;
Where now the ardent fire faith kindled in each soul?
Gone are they all! O world, to thee again have come
In filthy habit dressed, the days of ancient Rome!

The world has long outgrown her superstitious youth,
And sought and found the things of a material truth.

GROWTH OF THE NOVEL

Poetry, which superseded the drama in the first part of the century, declined and gave place to a new literary form, which held the popular fancy in the last part of the literary period, the novel. As the vogue of the novel is so largely responsible for the dearth of drama in the nineteenth century, it is helpful to know something of this movement, which later judgment has considered of sufficient importance to call the Golden Age of Fiction in both England and France.

Story-telling, in which modern fiction had its origin, is probably as old as spoken language. The first stories recounted the legendary deeds of saints and heroes: they were told about the camp-fires outside the walls of Troy; they were told around the great fireplaces of the vikings and by the wise men who sat at the gates of the Hebrew cities; but it remained for the writers of the nineteenth century to perfect the written form and elevate it to an art. The new literary form, while it may trace its ancestry much further back, had its beginning in Spain. We have seen that the influence of Cervantes was much greater over later fiction than over the drama, although he essayed both forms. In *Don Quixote*, as well as in the later *Pilgrim's Progress* of the English theologian, there is development of character under struggle. With the skilful character-sketches and depiction of life in the essays of Addison and Steele the basis of the English

novel was completed. Fielding and Smollett introduced realism, but it remained for Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot to give the novel a hold upon the public favor of which its pioneers had never dreamed.

The golden age of French fiction lies roughly between the first and the last novels of Victor Hugo. When he began to publish his work Balzac and Dumas were unknown; when he published *Ninety-Three*, his latest novel, they were both dead, and the last novel of George Sand was written. These four names represent a very wide range of fiction and demonstrated for all time the possibility of the novel as a literary form.

Here, as elsewhere in the study of literary epochs, something more than the law of chance is responsible. The nineteenth century witnessed the birth of a new class of society. Up to this time there had been but two classes in polite literature—aristocrat and peasant, educated and ignorant, rich and poor; but now there arose, through the marvelous extension of trade and industry, a great middle class, composed of tradesmen, accountants, salesmen, and the like, who were neither aristocrat nor peasant, neither highly educated nor grossly ignorant, neither rich nor poor; they were comfortable, respectable, thinking people. To amuse this great middle class by writing about it became popular and profitable. The novel was the chosen medium. It was easier than the drama and paid better.

There were certain dramatic movements of the nineteenth century whose significance is overshadowed by the greater impulse of poetry in the early years and of fiction in the later; namely, the work of the dramatic novelists in France and of the dramatic poets in England.

THE DRAMATIC NOVELISTS

Classic tragedy reigned supreme for nearly two hundred years in the French theater, or well into the nineteenth century. It was Alexandre Dumas *père* who led the drama

away from the classic and into the romantic movement. Once away from restraint, the pendulum of public taste swung to the opposite extreme. The works of the elder Dumas are full of exciting adventure; he hastily assembles his characters and sends them galloping off on a series of adventures with plots and counter-plots. A familiar example is *The Three Musketeers*. He affords his audience romantic escape from the realities of life. The adherents of the classic school did not surrender without a struggle; when Victor Hugo's *Hernani* was produced it almost caused a riot.

It was Eugène Scribe who first perfected the technic of the play; he was a clever craftsman, but his work falls short of enduring literature. It remained for Dumas *fils* and Augier to take over the form and put into it that indefinite something which raised it to the realm of literature. Their plays are readable as well as actable, although they abandoned the purely romantic for social propaganda. Dumas the younger used the stage as a platform. His *La Dame aux Camellias* has been rendered immortal by the interpretation of the great emotional actress Sarah Bernhardt. "Whatever is in nature, is also in art," was the slogan of the new school, and it carried them on through the realism of Flaubert and the Goncourt brothers to the naturalism of Zola, which took on newness of life later in German letters. The wit and gaiety of Sardou added several clever creations to the French stage, notably *Madame Sans-Gêne*.

An English play, among the few of the nineteenth century to endure intermittently almost to the present day, was the work of the novelist Bulwer-Lytton. *The Lady of Lyons* was revived by Sir Henry Irving and for fifty years satisfied the public taste. It indicates how relatively low was the quality of the acting drama of this period that this and Bulwer-Lytton's *Richelieu* are among the most favorable specimens of the early Victorian era. J. M. Barrie was not to forsake fiction for the drama until the dawn of the next century.

But a play is not a novel dramatized, and the separation of the two forms was imminent and inevitable.

ESTABLISHMENT OF FREE THEATERS

To have great drama there must be great audiences, too. The sterility of the nineteenth century is largely due to the fact that there were no national audiences united in thought and consciousness. The greatest dramatists of the latter part of the century had no stage and no audience. Then came the establishment of the free theaters in France in 1887, in Berlin in 1889, and in England in 1891. England and the Continent saw such revolutionary plays as Ibsen's *Ghosts* and Tolstoy's *Power of Darkness*, and with renewed hope writers of distinction turned to the neglected drama as a means of expression. The influence of the free theaters upon production will be taken up under the respective countries.

II

POETIC DRAMA OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The true poetic drama is not the closet-drama; it is not the mere costume-play in blank verse; it is not the empty imitation of the Elizabethan formula. It is a play composed in accordance with the conditions of the modern theater, whether in verse or prose matters little, but poetic in theme and treatment, as well as dramatic in theme and treatment. It is a play at once truly poetic and truly dramatic,—only this and nothing more.

—*A Study of the Drama*, Brander Matthews

SOME DISTINCTION OF TERMS

IN the beginning poetry and drama were one. With the Greek masters of tragedy there was no distinction of function; their poetry was drama, and their drama was written in verse; even Greek comedy rose to the heights of poetic beauty, as in certain passages of Aristophanes. The outstanding figures in the history of the drama—to select one from each episode, Sophocles, Shakespeare, Calderón, Molière, and Goethe—were all poets. Until the end of the eighteenth century approaches, drama and poetry were closely wedded; from that time we have a gradual estrangement and poetry supplanted by prose. To be sure, there were poetic dramas written in the nineteenth century, but with a difference: they were written by men who had won distinction in other literary forms; the functions of poet and dramatist were no longer inseparable; the poet might dabble in the drama, and the dramatist might make a poetic play, but the arts were at last differentiated.

After poetry and drama were divorced it became necessary to establish the identity of the numerous offspring. We are confronted with dramatic poems, dramatic monologues, epic

poems with dramatic quality, costume-plays in verse, and dialogues in metrical form, all claiming the good old family name of "poetic drama." To add to the confusion, we have plays written in prose that are full of the spirit of poetry, and plays written in verse that are neither poetic nor dramatic. The first effort in taking up the study of poetic drama must be to determine what constitutes genuine poetic drama.

A poetic drama is a play both poetic and dramatic, conforming to the requirements of the theater and written with an eye upon the audience; in short, a play that will act, although it is in verse.

The dramatic poem is merely a dialogue in verse, intended to be read, not acted. It may have dramatic passages, but it lacks the swift action and emotional intensity needed to make it an acting play. Browning's *Pippa Passes*, although it has been produced, is a dramatic poem, and Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* falls into the same class. Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon*, modeled upon the Greek drama, and the *Empedocles on Etna* of Arnold are other examples of the dramatic poem from the nineteenth century.

The so-called closet-drama differs from the dramatic poem in being more pretentious. It is altogether a play but unsuited to the stage, because of its lagging action, long descriptions, and reflections. Such a drama is *Manfred* by Lord Byron and *Luria* by Robert Browning. The closet-drama always appears, says Professor Matthews, when for any reason the stage is in disrepute. The writers loftily ignore the theater and create for the student in the chimney-corner.

The dramatic monologue is too familiar to require definition or illustration. The *Andrea del Sarto* and *Fra Lippo Lippi* of Browning are among the most famous of the many monologues the great psychological poet has left to enrich literature. This form gives opportunity for the subtle analysis in which the writer so delighted.

William Archer states that there is not a single blank-verse

play for two centuries, from 1700 to 1900, which lives or deserves to live on the stage to-day. We may or may not care to take issue with this statement, but there are a few poetic dramas of the nineteenth century which the student of literature will wish to know outside of the work of Ibsen, Hauptmann, Sudermann, Rostand, and Maeterlinck, whose contribution to certain movements of the drama was so great that they will be taken up individually later in the study.

One of the young English revolutionists left a tragedy which shines in the mediocrity of its environment like a lone star in a great expanse of darkening sky—*The Cenci*, by Percy Bysshe Shelley.

STUDY OF *The Cenci*

Shelley intended this tragedy to be acted and made every effort to get it produced at Covent Garden; he wrote the part of Beatrice with Miss O'Neill in mind. The horror of the theme prevented its production, and it has only been given once, in 1886, before a large audience under the auspices of the Shelley Society in London. Any one who follows the swift emotional intensity of the play from the opening moments to the pathos of the closing scene will agree that it is an acting play. The story comes from an old manuscript relating the history of the tragic end of the famous Cenci family. In this it resembles Browning's later treatment of the murder-trial in *The Ring and the Book*; not, indeed, in form, but in spirit. Even as Browning wove the vulgar and sordid details into the "lilied loveliness" of a ring, so this earlier poet weaves his tragic tale of uncontrolled crime about the chaste loveliness of a woman. Beatrice and Pompilia are much alike in their patience under persecution and their unsullied purity of thought. The story, improbable and shocking as it is to-day, was not impossible in the days of Italian life with which it deals. We have historical evidence of such monsters as Count Cenci during the Italian Renaissance.

Shelley was very fond of the Greek poets, and there is much evidence of Greek influence in this tragedy but no bondage to Greek form. It employs the Greek dramatic motive of horror. The accursed family of the Cenci are a close second to the ill-fated House of Atreus with their incest and parricide. The banquet with which Count Cenci celebrates the death of his sons, the gloomy Castle of Petrella, and the prison with its torture-chamber are all elements of horror in which Attic audiences delighted. Reminiscent of the Greeks, also, is the irony of fate which sends the legate with a warrant for Cenci's arrest and execution after the deed has been done which condemns his family to death.

The influence of Shakespeare may be detected in several scenes, particularly that of the murder, where the assassins hesitate to touch an old man as he sleeps.

In style, this drama is very unlike Shelley's usual manner. It has but one descriptive passage, and the language is restrained and sincere. The lines are almost austere and entirely free of the artificial diction of the past century.

In determining the purpose of the play it is well to read the author's preface in which he says that he seeks to show the dark and secret caverns of the heart. It sets forth the eternal conflict of love and hate, of good and evil. Although vice is exploited in the person of Count Cenci, Shelley gives us virtue, radiant, in Beatrice, and we cannot doubt that the author's own faith, however much he suffered, was in the ultimate triumph of the good. There is in it the wistful cry of one who cannot understand the problems of life, voiced in the despairing exclamation of Beatrice:

What a world we make—the oppressor and the oppressed!

And again:

You do well telling me to trust in God,
I hope I do trust in him. In whom else
Can any trust? And yet my heart is cold.

In *The Cenci* we have the beginning of that modern conflict

which was to supplant the ancient immutable moral order, "a soul's incertitude in the midst of an uncomprehended world."

The restraint and pathos of the final words of Beatrice are not excelled in dramatic literature:

Give yourself no unnecessary pain,
My dear Lord Cardinal. Here, Mother, tie
My girdle for me, and bind up this hair
In any simple knot; ay, that does well.
And yours I see is coming down. How often
Have we done this for one another; now
We shall not do it any more. My Lord,
We are quite ready. Well, 't is very well.

In the golden days of Greek tragedy the horror of *The Cenci* would have added to its success, but in the nineteenth century, we can but repeat, it shines like a belated star in an empty horizon.

QUESTIONS ON THE DRAMA

As you read are you convinced that this is an acting play?
What conditions of Italian life during the Renaissance make the story possible?

Of what Greek banquet does the feast of Count Cenci remind you?

Mention other ill-fated houses recorded in literature.

What passages of the play are reminiscent of Shakespeare?

Can you detect a trace of *Lear*? Of *Macbeth*?

What example of the irony of fate does the play present?

Compare Shelley's use of horror with that of the Greeks.

Where is the single bit of description?

Explain the anomaly of a man so consecrated to evil calling upon God.

In what light does Shelley show the church?

What is the conflict in this drama?

Does either of the contending forces triumph, or is the ending indeterminate?

Have you seen a reproduction of the portrait of Beatrice Cenci in prison? ¹

STUDY OF A Blot in the 'Scutcheon

Robert Browning wrote about nine plays, of which *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon* is the most actable. The very qualities which have made the author's poetry distinctive have militated against their dramatic quality. His characters reveal their moods by long soliloquies, or revolve some problem of life or morals. When such monologues are staged they become exceedingly stilted and artificial. There is not enough action to carry the reflective passages.

A Blot in the 'Scutcheon is the simplest of Browning's plays, the freest from obscurity, and moves with swift emotional intensity. It was written in the short space of a week at the request of the actor-manager Macready, who failed to push the production, and his failure caused a breach in the long friendship of the two men. It was first produced at Drury Lane Theater and has been revived several times. The characters are well drawn, and the lines are rich in poetry.

The theme of the play is the fantastic code of honor which can carry cruelty unto death to avenge a supposed blot. Against such a code Mildred protests with her dying breath:

I dare approach that Heaven
Which has not bade a living thing despair,
Which needs no code to keep its grace from stain.

The plot is improbable and the action of the characters inconsistent. They do not employ ordinary common sense in averting the tragedy but rush impetuously on to ruin. The whole sequel is obviously unnecessary. The conflict is between the personalities of the play rather than their environment. It is not blind chance which brings about the fatali-

¹ This is available in the Brown or Perry reproductions of famous pictures.

ties but the inevitable consequence of the clash of characters. The dramatic device of letting the audience into the guilty secret is cleverly accomplished in the opening scene, where the conduct of Gerard hints that all is not well with the noble house. Guendolen is excellently drawn—merry, lovable, and loyal. Thorold is consistent but a selfish egotist, who is obsessed with one idea, to hold his 'scutcheon up, unsullied, to an admiring world.

In this, as in all of Browning's dramas, the external incidents are subordinate to the internal conflicts; they are set upon earth, but we feel that they have to do with some larger sequence of the spirit which we but dimly grasp.

QUESTIONS ON THE DRAMA

What secret does the opening scene reveal?

Compare Guendolen with the Beatrice of Shakespeare.

Do the characters act consistently?

Why does Mildred urge her lover to return, knowing discovery is fatal?

Why does not Guendolen take steps to avert the tragedy?

In Mertoun's death-scene who has the greater dignity, Mertoun or Thorold?

How is the audience prepared for Mildred's sudden death?

Is Thorold as impetuous in his notions of honor as Mildred in her love?

How largely does the pathos lie in the youth of the lovers?

How much of the effect is due to the needlessness of the ruin?

What is the conflict in this play?

Would a lover in Mertoun's dangerous situation be apt to sing beneath a high window?

STUDY OF *Becket*

Becket is the second in a trilogy of historic plays which Tennyson wrote to portray the making of the English nation.

In the first, *Harold*, we have the conflict for supremacy between the Danes, Saxons, and Normans in the dawn of the racial consciousness; *Becket* sets forth the struggle between the king and the church; *Queen Mary* depicts the downfall of Roman Catholicism in England, the end of priestly domination, and the greater freedom of the individual. Two of these plays were produced by Sir Henry Irving, *Queen Mary* and *Becket*.

In 1879 Irving refused the play of *Becket*, but in 1891 he asked permission to produce it, and it proved very successful both in Europe and America. It was cut a great deal in the performance. Tennyson's gift was lyrical and meditative rather than dramatic.

The conflict between church and state which raged for so many centuries is the struggle set forth in *Becket*. The principles are embodied in the characters of two proud men, neither of whom will yield. That Thomas a Becket, son of a London merchant, has been raised to the position of Chancellor and then Archbishop of Canterbury by the friendship of Henry II makes the situation more tense and the characterization of Becket more subtle. He has loved Henry, loves him still; they have been boon companions, but there is no wavering in this indomitable will:

I served King Henry well as Chancellor;
I am his no more, and I must serve the Church.
And all my doubts I fling from me like dust,
Winnow and scatter all scruples to the wind,
And all the puissance of the warrior,
And all the wisdom of the Chancellor,
And all the heaped experiences of life,
I cast upon the side of Canterbury—
Our holy mother Canterbury, who sits
With tattered robes.

Resisting every concession with the maddening phrase, "saving the honor of my order," excommunicating those who oppose him, this daring archbishop goes serenely to martyrdom knowing that his blood will make secure the cause for

which it is shed. Strange blending of strength and tenderness are displayed in the character of Becket: strength to stand absolutely alone against two kings, with the pope wavering and pleading for a middle course; tenderness to minister to the sick and wretched and to stoop in love above a wild fowl's nest:

I once was out with Henry in the days
 When Henry loved me, and we came upon
 A wild-fowl sitting on her nest, so still
 I reach'd my hand and touch'd; she did not stir;
 The snow had frozen round her, and she sat
 Stone-dead upon a heap of ice-cold eggs.
 Look! how this love, this mother, runs thro' all
 The world God made—even the beast—the bird!

The love-thread of the secret bower and the fair Rosamund relieves the tense situation of the greater conflict.

Note the realism of the banquet-scene in Act I, Scene IV, the characterization of Margery, and the artificial creation of Walter Map. When at last the man who had intimidated his world and threatened kings with the interdiction of the church lay covered with wounds at his own altar, it is a fitting dramatic touch that only Rosamund—poor Rosamund whom the world had used so ill—knelt beside him there. His archbishop's responsibility had been heavy upon him, and there were times when he longed to be

A fisherman at Bosham, my good Herbert,
 Thy birthplace—the sea-creek—the petty rill
 That falls into it—the green field—the gray church—
 The simple lobster-basket, and the mesh—
 The more or less of daily labor done—
 The pretty gaping bills in the home-nest
 Piping for bread—the daily want supplied—
 The daily pleasure to supply it.

And "good Herbert," knowing the proud will of the archbishop, replied:

You had not borne it, no, not for a day.

Then Becket quietly agrees:

Well, maybe, no.

There is no more powerful dramatic motive than a man pitted against the world for the sake of an idea and dying unconquered and unconquerable: and there is no greater devotion to an idea in the annals of history than that which Tennyson has dramatized in the story of Becket.

QUESTIONS ON THE DRAMA

What is the significance of the game of chess in the opening scene?

Sir Henry Irving cut the play and opened with the entrance of Eleanor and Fitzurse. Why?

What is the struggle of the drama?

Is Becket animated by love of power or true devotion to the church?

What services does he render which demonstrate his humility?

Does his love for Henry hold unto the end?

Why does he return the great seal?

Is there any particular reason for the prose of certain portions?

What portion of the play seems directly modeled on Shakespeare?

Is there any historical basis for the belief that Rosamund was married to Henry before Eleanor and that her child was legitimate?

Are the characters of Henry, Louis, and Eleanor true historically?

Which won the struggle, the king who destroyed his enemy or the man who died without a concession?

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION: SURVEY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The relation of poetry and drama in the Greek masters.

The gradual divorce of the arts.

Poetic drama of the nineteenth century.

Taine's theory of creative impulse.

The process of convention and revolt.

Prevalence of poetry as a form of expression in the early century.

Conditions which encouraged the growth of fiction.

Coleridge's service to literary criticism.

Religious attitude of the age.

Relation of science to creative work.

Service of the novelists to the drama.

The distinction between true poetic drama and closet-drama.

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ACT ONE

THE CURTAIN RISES IN THE FAR NORTH

I

THE SCANDINAVIAN THEATER OF IDEAS

While the drama of thought flowered first in the Northern Countries it has been a definite world movement, felt sooner or later in England and in Russia, in Japan and in Germany, in America, in Italy, France and Spain.

—*The New Movement in the Theater*, Sheldon Cheney

IBSEN, EXPONENT OF THE THEATER OF IDEAS

THE last episode of historic drama was enacted upon the Continent with one scene in Spain, another in France, and the third and last in Germany. When the curtain rises again, after the introductory preliminaries, we are looking upon the austere northern countries. Not only has the setting changed but so have the types of actors and the framework of the play. The first thing that every thoughtful student wishes to know, when approaching the modern, is what sets apart the work of Ibsen in this epoch-making manner from the past; why he is the acknowledged dividing-point between past and present, between historic and modern.

To determine this point the traditions of the drama must be briefly reviewed. The Greek theory of tragedy as formulated by Aristotle rests upon conflict, the conflict of a self-originating will with an immutable moral order. There was but one possible end to such a struggle, the destruction of the presumptuous offender, by which justice was upheld and the moral order vindicated. This formula applies also to the great tragedies of Shakespeare. But thought traveled far by

the middle of the nineteenth century, and no such simple rule of procedure would suffice to account for the tragedies men saw all about them. A character might be in perpetual struggle with his environment, through no offense of his own, by the laws of heredity or the bondage of social injustice. *Modern tragedy, then, deals with a human soul out of harmony with its environment.*

Historic drama was concerned with the experiences of life; modern drama deals with the truth underlying those experiences. Historic drama was interested primarily in the story; modern drama cares chiefly about the idea involved. We are apt to speak of modern plays in terms of ideas. We do not say of *Justice*, This is the story of a man who did thus and so; but we say, This is a drama dealing with the injustice of our reformatory measures, and it led to the betterment of English prisons. The idea is first and circumstance second in our memory of the play.

Whether we choose to consider our modern tendency toward the thesis-play as a new birth or as the complaining gasps of a peevish old age, we cannot but admit that the drama of ideas dominates the theater of to-day and that its first, and still its greatest exponent, is Henrik Ibsen. "It will be found, I think," says Professor Lewisohn in *The Modern Drama*, "when the tumult of contemporary judgment merges into the quiet certitude of posterity, that a few of his successors have surpassed him in reality and mystery, in sweetness and in insight. But behind them and their fellows stands that cold, gigantic figure with all the visions of its age in its unshadowed eyes."

Ibsen does not lose his art in his propaganda; he maintains a remarkable balance of idea and story, and he is a master of both prose and poetic forms. In his later work he observes the unities of time and place, not because he feels under any obligation to tradition, but because he depicts a life at its crisis, and concentration suits his purpose. Like the Greeks he admits no violent action upon the stage; all the tragedy is revealed by simple dialogue, colorless and re-

strained. It has been said of him that he has no heroes and no villains and that his heroines are all unwomanly women. Although he deals in ideas, his characters are not mere abstractions, vices or virtues, moving like puppets through the play, but real men and women drawn from contemporary life in the isolated communities of his own Norway.

The Three Periods of Ibsen's Literary Career

1. The Romantic

Ibsen left twenty-eight plays, extending over fifty years and covering the second half of the nineteenth century. In that half-century he exemplified the entire range of modern drama through romanticism to realism, through realism to symbolism.

He began as a romanticist; his first plays deal with heroic personages in imaginary situations. He was a romantic idealist, drawing upon the material of ballad and saga for his themes. To this first period of his activity belong the three dramas, *Brand*, *Peer Gynt*, and *Emperor and Galilean*, which constitute a great epic trilogy. A critic has likened these plays very aptly to a symphony, in which *Brand* is the somber opening movement, *Peer Gynt* the brilliant scherzo, and *Emperor and Galilean* the solemn and mystic finale. Yet even in these early plays Ibsen was not without his thesis. "So to conduct one's life as to realize one's self is the loftiest attainment of man"; in these words the dramatist formulates his philosophy, which is embodied positively in the character of Brand and negatively in Peer Gynt. In self-realization there is no possibility of compromise.

No lover of literature will be content to remain unfamiliar with the plays of Ibsen as a whole; here, as in Shakespeare, elimination and selection entail too great a loss, but for the purpose of illustration individual reading of *Brand* and *Peer Gynt* from the romantic period is recommended. Although the true relation of Ibsen's work to the modern theater ac-

tually began with the second period of his activity, these two plays embody a deep philosophy of life and present epic characters immortal in the world's literature because, like Job, Hamlet, and Faust, they are types of the seeking soul of man.

STUDY OF *Brand*

Brand is a poetic drama in five acts, published in 1866, and marks the beginning of Ibsen's European fame. The author probably did not intend it to be acted.

It has been produced in Stockholm about fifteen times in its entirety, requiring nearly seven hours for the performance. The fourth act has been produced in Christiania and in London.

The Theme of *Brand* sets forth a wholly imaginary situation embodying devotion to the Christian ideal of self-sacrifice. The priest, Brand, adopts as his slogan, "Naught, or all in all!" He admits of no compromise in the pursuit of his ideal. Ibsen declared that the fact that Brand is a priest is not at all essential; he might as well have been a sculptor or a scientist, provided an idea could be found great enough to goad him to unswerving allegiance. This removes the play from any suspicion of theological doctrine and makes its appeal universal.

There is a political significance underlying the motive which the reader who is ignorant of Norwegian history is apt to miss and is probably none the worse for missing. Norway is satirized in the trimmers and hypocrites surrounding Brand and Agnes. Occasionally the words are Ibsen's own, as where Brand bitterly exclaims, "I see the fell cancer that eats our country's marrow out."

In structure *Brand* would be chosen as one of the best examples of the poetic drama of the nineteenth century if it were not of even greater significance because of its philosophic and dramatic content. The poetry is rich and varied.

The first scene is a fit opening for the tragic finale; there

amid treacherous ice and baffling mists Brand seeks his dangerous and solitary way and makes his irrevocable decision to pursue the upward path, forsaking the pleasant sunlit valleys. There he determines that a man's true course is to hold to that which he is seeking to express, regardless of consequence.

Be what you are with all your heart,
And not by pieces and in part.

There is, in the supernatural voice at the close of the play, a survival of the *deus ex machina* device of Euripides.

In characterization Brand's uncompromising idealism leads eventually to the severing of all human relations. His mother is allowed to die without his blessing because she refuses to surrender all at his demand; the child perishes because he refuses to take it out of the dark valley into the health-giving sunshine; Agnes's last thread of life snaps when she is compelled to part with the little garments of her dead child; the great church which he builds with so many sacrifices is no more spiritual than the old; the faithful few who have followed him to the heights turn back with curses and flung stones; the phantoms of wife and child seek to lure him from the way; the invisible choir reproves; yet he persists, striving still to "live the vision into deed." When assured that all is lost, he wistfully maintains "the path of yearning's left" and questions with his latest breath:

Shall they wholly miss thy light
Who unto man's utmost might
Will'd—

No voice of commendation, not even that of his own soul, sustains him in the final hour; only Gerd, poor demented Gerd, proclaims his victory:

Thou art the Redeeming Man!

In Brand's idea of God, as set forth in the first scene, we have the prototype of many a modern conception of a youth-

ful struggling spirit and a repudiation of ancient traditions.

Ye

Make of God a dotard and a dreamer,
 Verging on second infancy.
 Ye need such feebleness to brook
 A God who'll through his fingers look;
 Who like yourselves is hoary grown,
 And keeps a cap for his bald crown.
 Mine is another kind of God!
 Mine is a storm where thine's a lull,
 Implacable where thine's a clod;
 And He is young like Hercules,
 No hoary sipper of life's lees!

There are but two who see the meanness and hypocrisy of the community as it really is: the priest who strives to awaken the slumbering people, and the outcast from respectability, Gerd, who looks and laughs. It is significant that Gerd should appear in the crisis of Brand's irresolution, pointing him to the ice-church, and again in the final scene where she accompanies him to death. There has always been a tradition in literature, half superstition and half fact, that the fool and the half-crazed person apprehend truth more directly than the sage. The fools of *Lear* and of Mr. Yeats's *Hour-Glass* are familiar examples. Perhaps their isolation from the human brings a closer relation with the divine. Brand muses upon Gerd and wonders:

Which wildest reel, which blindest grope,
 Lightheart who crowned with leafage gay,
 Loves by the dizziest verge to play,—
 Faint-heart who marches slack and slow
 Because old Wont will have it so;—
 Wild-heart, who borne on lawless wings
 Sees fairness in the foulest things.

Agnes is a voluntary sacrifice to an unfaltering ideal which was not her own but another's. Is it not true that the supreme martyrdom is not to the star-bright idealists but to

those loving souls who follow, unsustained by the vision and knowing not whether it be false or true?

The Dean is a delightful picture of worldly compromise who reasons:

Wont and Use, if not the best
Of things, are yet the needfulest.

He chides the over-zealous priest who is becoming uncomfortable to live with:

You have striven to express
And emphasize unlikenesses
That slumbered hitherto unknown.
Men, mere Church-members till of late,
To Personalities are grown.
That does no service to the State.

The good Dean desires above all else that uniformity of life which our modernists have anathematized under the brand-new name of "standardization."

I have heard
Our soldiers call it keeping time.
Ah yes, friend, that's the very word!
That's what the State desires!
All men to step alike, and beat
The selfsame music from their feet.

The Village Doctor is treated kindly and humorously, and the political tactics of the Mayor may be duplicated in almost any community.

The one who is taking up the study of Ibsen for the first time is wiser not to be too much concerned about his symbolism. When the students of years disagree, it is best not to be too arbitrary in analysis. There is a symbolism of the ice-church and the falcon which may be felt rather than expressed, a haunting suggestion that draws near and then eludes, like that in the modern poem *The Falconer of God*. Terror predominates in the one and sheer unattainable

beauty in the other, but in the ultimate perhaps they are the same; who knows? Certainly not the authors.

Ibsen's ending, his use of the supernatural voice proclaiming the law of love, seems to put Brand in the wrong, yet the reader is not so sure. One is left with the uncomfortable sense that perhaps Brand after all was right and the rest of the world, including ourselves, complacently and hopelessly wrong. Was Ibsen, beneath his cold, mocking exterior, satirizing the Christian ideal or exalting it? Was he depicting the tyranny of a false ideal or the triumph of an unconquerable soul? The drama is there; decide for yourself. Ibsen never surrendered the keys to his mysteries.

Certain modernists have declared that the return to the Christian ideals which we acknowledge with our lips but deny in our conduct is the only salvation for future civilization. This drama of a man, heroic, if mistaken, shows us how far most of the world is from the selfless law of Christ.

Lack of space forbids any detailed discussion of *Peer Gynt*, but it should be read in connection with *Brand*. It is much more easily understood and has been frequently interpreted upon the modern stage. Peer is the great compromiser, trimming his conduct to make smooth every situation, but in doing so he comes perilously near losing himself. Only the love that lingers in the heart of the woman whom he has forsaken saves him from the dread Button-Molder.

QUESTIONS ON Brand

Is it of importance to the plot that the hero is a priest?

What German drama depicts a struggle toward a church upon the heights?

Why is the fool so often employed in literature to reveal truth?

Was not Becket's "saving only the honor of mine order" as uncompromising as Brand's "naught or all"?

What is the significance of Brand's call to Agnes for light in Act IV?

Did Agnes believe her husband was right?

What was the doctor's opinion of Brand's conduct?

Is it true that the path of Agnes was the harder one?

Are the Dean and the Mayor true characterizations?

Was it the Christian ideal which Ibsen depicts or rather the stern law of Jehovah which led Abraham to offer his only son?

Was there any point at which Brand might have compromised without sacrificing his highest ideal?

Is martyrdom the inevitable path of all who refuse to compromise with life?

What instances in literature and history can you mention?

Does Ibsen intend us to consider the end a failure for Brand, or a triumph?

2. The Realistic

It is with the second period of Ibsen's literary career, in which he abandoned his romantic settings and idealistic themes for the grim and narrow stage of contemporary Norwegian life and the hypocrisy of social conventions, that the student of the modern drama is most concerned. *The Comedy of Love*, satirizing the hypocrisy of the conventional marriage, and *The League of Youth*, dealing with political hypocrisy, were the first dramas of social revolt.

Ibsen was fifty years of age when his characteristic theory of life received dramatic expression in *The Pillars of Society*. Behind him lay more than half of his total production. The dramas which come from him now are "like blows in the face of a smug and complacent society." They are terse, concentrated, colorless almost to monotony; poetry is abandoned for simple and natural prose dialogue; the setting is realistic; the plays are brief, and their characters are few; they deal with domestic rather than political problems; they reflect the doings of small communities, yet they are universal rather than provincial. They form the basis of the modern drama of social revolt, maintaining the freedom of the individual

from the bondage of social institutions. They are plays of the inner rather than the outer life, dramas of the soul. His characters are not permitted to sermonize or set forth a thesis; they *live*, and their lives speak more forcibly than words do. In this latter accomplishment, setting forth a thesis by means of living, suffering humanity without comment, Ibsen carried the drama away from the polemics of Scribe and Dumas *filis* and across the border-land of the modern.

“Regenerate the individual and society will take care of itself,” said Ibsen; and over across the sea in the great spaces of a new continent, in quite a different medium, Walt Whitman was leading a revolt of his own, and his words were almost identical:

Underneath all, individuals!

I swear nothing is good to me now that ignores individuals,
The American compact is altogether with individuals,
The only government is that which makes minute of individuals,
The whole theory of the universe is directed to one single individual—
namely to You.

“I intend to start a revolution,” declares Ibsen, “against the lie that it is the majority who have the truth in their keeping.” “The strongest man in the world is he who stands most alone.” This was illustrated in the play, *An Enemy of the People*.

Then followed in rapid succession those scathing revelations of the lies with which society protected its sacred institutions—lies about marriage; worm-eaten fabrics of respectability fell aside and exposed grim skeletons; men and women trembled, stormed, and protested, but every attack brought out a sequel which was worse than the first. Small wonder that this Titan, smashing the little gods of men, has earned the name of the Great Awakener. Play is linked with play in the revelation of his central philosophy, and the play usually begins with the crisis which in Elizabethan days would have been held back for the fifth act.

The satire of Ibsen is directed, not against the frailties and follies of contemporary life or human nature, but against the sham of the lives which results when a certain ideal is accepted as the standard of respectability and ignored in practice.

The philosophy of individualism which Ibsen set forth should not be confused with the sheer selfish individualism of certain modern fiction. Selfish individualism defeats itself, Ibsen plainly tells us in *Peer Gynt* and in *Rosmersholm*; there is more than a hint of it in the *Master Builder* and *When We Dead Awaken*. Ibsen does not portray a hero of the type of the erotic demoniac in *Many Marriages*.

STUDY OF A Doll's House

This has been one of the most popular of Ibsen's plays upon the stage and aroused a great deal of discussion. Most of the great actresses have at some time interpreted the character of Nora.

Freedom to develop personality in marriage is the theme of *A Doll's House*. The Norwegian playwright had dared to attack the sacred institution of marriage. The world gasped; the Germans would not permit it to be played in their country as it was written but substituted a "happy ending" in which Nora steals in to look at her sleeping children, is overcome with remorse, weeps, and remains; the open door is simply locked for the night with Nora on the inside. Critics denounced. Ibsen replied by writing *Ghosts* which went further in its denunciation of the sense of duty which binds a woman in an unholy union than *A Doll's House* had dreamed of doing. The great playwright simply showed in *Ghosts* what happens when a woman like Nora is afraid to go out and close the door behind her.

Contrary to his usual custom of plunging into the crisis in the first act, Ibsen develops in Nora the sense of her great injustice at the end of the play.

It is the character of Nora which makes the plot possible.

She is a type of the sheltered woman, ignorant of many things but quick to grasp a situation. She is childish and self-indulgent but affectionate and impulsive and quite capable of great sacrifice for those whom she loves. Nora has never had any encouragement to develop character, but there is in her the possibility of strength.

From the moment when she commits her fatal error to save her husband's life Nora begins the painful process of growing a soul. When the crisis comes and she finds that the husband who has assumed spiritual control of her is a poor crumbling idol with feet of clay, she goes out of the doll's house and shuts the door behind her; the echo of that closing door went round the world.

Nora reviews her wrongs:

While I was at home with Father he used to tell me all his opinions and I held the same opinions. If I had others I concealed them; he would not have liked it. Then I came to live in your house—I mean I passed from Father's hands into yours. You settled everything according to your taste; and I got the same tastes as you; or I pretended to—I don't know which—both ways perhaps. When I look back upon it I seem to have been living here like a beggar, from hand to mouth. You and Father have done me a great wrong.

Helmer expostulates, "Before all you are a wife and mother." And in Nora's reply lay the gist of Ibsen's thesis, the thesis that shocked the world in his day:

That I no longer believe. I think that before all else I am a human being, just as much as you are—or, at least, I will try to become one.

The door which closed behind Nora is symbolic of that opening door of freedom for women when marriage shall cease to be bondage and become true communion of mind and spirit, enriching both the man and the woman.

Torvald, the husband of *A Doll's House*, is amiable; he loves his wife, after his fashion, which is the fashion of a plaything. He treats her as a child; he does not require any great strength of purpose from her, since he expects to be her

moral bulwark. He is honest, apparently a model man and husband, but utterly incapable of the finer feelings which Nora has attributed to him. In the crisis he turns into a coward and a bully and fails his wife utterly. He is quite ready to ignore the whole incident as soon as his personal danger of publicity is past. The Torvalds and Noras were not peculiar to Ibsen's day. All about us are men who assume spiritual dictatorship and women who blindly hope for a "miracle" to reveal the God within.

Dr. Rank is another of those victims of heredity which Ibsen so frequently pictures.

Did Nora ever return? Not to the doll's house, and it is quite unlikely that Helmer ever built a temple where the true marriage might be consummated. His type is far more apt to spend time in self-pity and regret than in building.

Did Nora find happiness in realization? Perhaps she did; perhaps she did not. She was a woman and a loving one, and her heart could never be wholly separated from her past. The fact remains that, happy or unhappy, she was true to the best that she could realize and stands a pioneer on paths that have since been worn by rebellious feet seeking larger liberty and loftier conceptions of love and marriage.

Ghosts should be read in connection with *A Doll's House*. Mrs. Alving remains, from a sense of duty, with her drunken and profligate husband, bringing upon herself and her son the awful tragedy of inherited disease and desires. Her life, devoted to duty, has become a tissue of lies; her past is a vault from which ghosts walk forth to haunt her.

I almost think we are all of us Ghosts, Pastor Manders. It is not only what we have inherited from our father and mother that "walks" in us. It is all sorts of dead ideas, and lifeless old beliefs. There must be Ghosts the country over, as thick as the sands of the sea. And then we are, one and all, *so pitifully afraid of the light*.

If *A Doll's House* brought a storm of protest about Ibsen, *Ghosts* increased it to a tornado; but, nothing daunted, this

great iconoclast answered by writing *The Enemy of the People*.

QUESTIONS ON *A Doll's House*

Does Nora's type exist to-day?

Do many such types go through life considering themselves fortunately situated?

Is perfect freedom of action necessary to happiness?

Does Torvald exist to-day in many a home?

In what character does Ibsen again attack the social evil?

What is the symbolism of the "open door" in *A Doll's House*?

Was the "miracle of miracles" Nora mentions apt to take place?

Did Helmer really love Nora, or was it merely desire of possession?

Did Nora's truth to herself involve any real wrong to her husband or children?

Did Mrs. Alving's devotion to her duty wrong others?

Did it paralyze her own spiritual life?

Is self-expression gained at the expense of others ever freedom?

3. The Symbolic

A certain secondary meaning underlies most of Ibsen's plays, but it does not obscure the story in the work of the earlier periods. His use of symbols is often quite obvious, as the opened door in the doll-house, the wild duck in the play of that name, the green and gold forest in *Little Eyolf*, the sea in *The Lady from the Sea*, and the white horses in *Rosmersholm*. But with the later period of his activity, the gloomy austere figure disregarded his earlier caution and piled symbol upon symbol, hid meaning within meaning, until the idea is often obscured. Between realism and symbolism he wavers, turning from one to the other with confusing rapidity. One moment we are quite sure of the basis of

fact beneath our feet; the next we are transported we know not whither. Nor is it at all necessary to an understanding of Ibsen's contribution to the drama that the student should run down each elusive symbol and pin it fast; to do so is to destroy much of the pleasure of pursuit.

The Master Builder, with its allegory of youth and age, offers the greatest difficulties. The symbolism becomes irritating in the final scenes. Out of this final epoch, the study of the play which Ibsen termed his dramatic epilogue, his last message to the world, is recommended.

STUDY OF *When We Dead Awaken*

This, the last of Ibsen's plays, was written with the premonition of impending death upon him. He wrote hastily and with great agitation. It was published before Christmas, 1899. In the dawn of the new century the cloud enveloped his mind which was not to lift again before the end. *When We Dead Awaken* has been produced at the leading theaters of Scandinavia and Germany and in London.

The theme is the same which Ibsen had used many times before: the forsaking of love for art's sake or material gain and the consequent barrenness of the life. We find this theme in *Peer Gynt*, in *The Pillars of Society*, in *John Gabriel Borkman*, and in *The Master Builder*. It is quite evidently a satire upon the dramatist's own artistic career. One critic has suggested that the figure sitting in penitence, earth-bound, in Rubek's group, represents Ibsen who turned from the idealism of his youth to realism.

We are plunged into the crisis in the first act. The sculptor, successful and prosperous, married to a woman much younger than himself, has undergone that subtle degeneration of character which enables him to see only the bestial qualities in those about him:

There is something equivocal, something cryptical, lurking in and behind these busts—a secret something, that the people themselves cannot see.

I alone can see it, and it amuses me unspeakably.

So far as his inspiration and his art are concerned he is already dead. The rest of the drama is concerned with his awakening to realization of his loss.

Once more we are reminded of the "god out of the machine" in the supernatural intervention of the avalanche and the voice of the Sister of Mercy.

Rubek is the type of selfish egotist who feeds the helpless loves of his life to the Moloch of his ambition. He buys success at too great a price and wonders why he is thoroughly miserable. Rubek molding monstrous portrait busts, John Gabriel Borkman pacing his den like an old lion, wounded and caged—through them the disillusioned dreamer speaks. All has been buried in that marble dream of his, even the unborn child.

How far the artist has a right to ignore the obligations of other men has been a favorite speculation, touched upon very recently by Mr. Ludwig Lewisohn in his *Creative Life*. "Let some good son paint my two hundred pictures!" cried Andrea del Sarto, and Heinrich, in Schnitzler's one-act play, excuses his ready acceptance of his mother's suicide to further his work by declaring that it is no mean vocation to give such hours an existence beyond the grave. "Living hours? They live no longer than the life of him who remembers them" but art, he argues, is eternal. We have the same idea in the tragedy of *La Gioconda* and the comedy of *The Concert*.

Irene, the model who has given herself for this work of art and then slipped away, is also dead, because the love-life within her has been killed.

I—we, we and our child were in that solitary figure.

She is a sister to that shadow hovering over a dead man in John Gabriel Borkman.

The cheap intrigue of the young wife is but a foil for the deeper tragedy of the two, who find in death the consummation and for one moment touch the tall stars.

Then let us two dead, for once live life to the utmost—before we go down into the grave again!

Hand in hand they press toward the summit; the mists inclose them; the roar of the avalanche is in their ears.

“Pax vobiscum!” cries the Sister of Mercy.

Only once in a lifetime is it vouchsafed to a man or a woman to touch the tall stars, says Huneke, and so they perish, but not before Rubek has cast off his life lie.

QUESTIONS ON *When We Dead Awaken*

Is *When We Dead Awaken* equal to Ibsen's earlier efforts?

What are some of its weaknesses?

What other plays carry a similar theme?

Is it considered to be autobiographical?

Does Ibsen forsake naturalism in the presentation?

Why does Irene call the statue their child?

What is the significance of Rubek's alterations in the group?

What is the significance of the man beside the fountain?

Does the modern tragedy accept death as a solution?

Does Ibsen wish us to believe that a moment's full consummation of life was a triumphant finale?

The Individualism of Ibsen

We are very apt to accept the tag which modern criticism has placed upon Ibsen without question. When asked about Ibsen's philosophy we glibly repeat, “He was an individualist,” and feel that we have settled the matter. What is an individualist? Webster gives two definitions applying to the case: the first defines individualism as “selfish interest, selfishness, egoism”; the second declares it to be “the practice regarding the chief end of society or of moral law to be the development of individual character.” The individualism of Ibsen is defined by the latter. There is an individualism

in the drama, and more especially in modern fiction, which is wholly defined by the first clause, but it is entirely too narrow to cover Ibsen's creed. Let us prove our case.

Brand, who was Ibsen's extreme individualist, carrying out his self-imposed law without compromise, grasped nothing from self-interest but renounced all for the sake of that which to him was truth; Peer Gynt, pursuing the primrose path of self-interest, did not attain the self-realization which was the supreme reward of the individualist, but came perilously near extinction. He is himself throughout, but he does not develop character in the process:

"To be oneself is to slay oneself," says the dread Button-Molder. We make a great difficulty out of this dual path of the individualist but it is all contained in the statement, "He who seeketh to save his life shall lose it, and he who loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Certain critics interpret Ibsen as satirizing the Christian ideal of self-sacrifice. He satirizes rather the hypocrisy of the lives of those who acknowledge the ideal of the cross and yet live for worldly gain. He brings nothing but misery upon his selfish individualists, Peer Gynt, Bernick, Borkman, Rebecca West, Rubek, Solness; they are a sorry enough group. On the other hand, one may say with equal truth he bestows no happiness upon his characters who, like Brand, may be supposed to have attained the heights. Ibsen did not believe in happiness "as the chief end and aim of man." It was life he sought to depict, and life can not be reduced to so simple a formula. Ibsen is merciless: just for a moment perhaps he allows his men and women to touch the "tall stars" of self-realization; and then the avalanche! Ibsen was not only a realist; he was also a mystic.

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS ARRANGED CHRONOLOGICALLY

Brand (1865)

Peer Gynt (1867)

The Pillars of Society (1877)

A Doll's House (1879)

Ghosts (1881)

An Enemy of the People (1882)

The Wild Duck (1884)

Rosmersholm (1886)

The Lady from the Sea (1888); produced in New York, 1923, with Eleanora Duse

Hedda Gabler (1890)

The Master Builder (1892)

Little Eyolf (1894)

John Gabriel Borkman (1896)

When We Dead Awaken (1899)

Edited by William Archer, and published by Charles Scribner's Sons

BJÖRNSON: BEGINNINGS OF THE SOCIAL DRAMA

Björnson is usually classed as a realist, although, like Ibsen, he won laurels as a poetic dramatist and began with romantic treatment. He is the transitional link between the extreme individualism of Ibsen on the one hand and the collectivism of later social dramatists. While he sometimes makes a hero of the isolated individual, he also depicts the struggle between classes, as in *The Editor*, where radicals and conservatives are at war, and in *The New System*, which treats of the tyranny of large business interests. He is the forerunner of a long line of social dramatists of whom Shaw, Galsworthy, and Brioux are famous examples.

Björnson is a moralist and a propagandist, using the stage as a pulpit. His uncompromising morality is seen in such characters as Arvik, in *When the New Wine Blooms*, who does not carry his revolt to the point of irretrievable ruin, but only far enough to insure repentance and reconciliation with his family.

Perhaps it is in his treatment of domestic problems and his attitude toward women that Björnson differs most from Ibsen. He is more human and more optimistic. Ibsen has

not given us a single picture of a loving and happy family; Björnson left three comedies in which readjustment follows estrangement, two of them dealing with drifting apart in middle age and the third with the establishment of the new home. He exalts the domestic virtues; he preaches that life is more than work and that love should never be sacrificed to business or material interests. His ideal of marriage, as put into the mouth of the pastor in *When the New Wine Blooms*, is the old-fashioned doctrine of exclusive ownership of the woman by her husband:

“The highest happiness that a husband can conceive is for his wife to yield him her whole being because she believes in him,” says Pastor Hall, and generously adds, “I am convinced that for her also this is the highest happiness.” Acting upon the good pastor’s thesis, Nora would be still playing squirrel tricks and munching macaroons in the doll-house.

If Björnson is old-fashioned in his pronouncements in *When the New Wine Blooms*, he makes up for it in his treatment of the double standard in *The Gauntlet*, where the woman demands from her husband the chastity she is willing to give. She refuses him, with a blow of her glove in his face, when she learns that he has had a mistress.

It is never the business of a woman to act as a moral laundress for her husband,

atones in a way for the priggishness of Pastor Hall.

Newly Married is as frankly didactic as a school-room class. When the lesson is over the curtain drops—and everybody lives happily ever after.

Björnson is best known to-day by a play which exemplifies in the first part his religious thought, and in the second part social criticism—*Beyond Human Power*. It is the most intense of his plays. Individual reading of *The Gauntlet* and *Beyond Human Power* is recommended.

STUDY OF Beyond Human Power

The theme is the possibility of faith to transcend human bounds. The play is a study of the effect of faith upon human will.

In structure the dialogue is sincere and the action kept within sight or hearing of the white bed about which it revolves. The time is from morning until sunset.

Beyond Human Power has been produced at the Théâtre Libre and in Berlin. New York saw Mrs. Patrick Campbell in the rôle of Clara in 1902.

Among the characters, Pastor Sang makes his decision, long before the play opens, that it is not miraculous power which is wanting in the world, but lack of faith, and if there were only one who dared to throw himself absolutely upon the promise, power would be forthcoming and thousands would follow. He resolves to be that one. It is a mystic theme well suited to the austere North, which "demands the unusual" of its people. There is no more compromise in the nature of Pastor Sang than in that of Brand, although he lacks Brand's austere and censorious consciousness. Björnson's idealist is human, genial, and broadly tolerant; he refuses to sit in judgment.

Like all religious zealots he moves through the world with supreme unconcern for material things. Clara says of him that he could accomplish much in his special direction because he is so pathetically lacking in other directions. He lacks a sense of reality. His highly strung emotional temperament unfits him to discuss the problems of faith. He goes by inner intuition rather than by reasoned processes. "I am altogether a man of emotions," he says.

Clara, on the contrary, possesses reason and judgment in rare balance. She must always look upon the practical side where her family is concerned and must thrust herself between her impetuous husband and his hazards. In so doing she breaks beneath the strain of the double burden.

Although unable to share completely her husband's faith, Clara has a faith that never wavers, and that is her faith in Pastor Sang:

I am not without him. You feel sorry for me? For me who have made life's journey with the best man in the world?

Hers is the sacrifice of love, not of faith. Compare Ibsen's picture of Agnes.

In this play the temperaments are as opposing as those of Strindberg's play, *The Father*, but here all is sweet and loving surrender and tolerance, with one of the tenderest pictures of married love in literature.

Note the individualization and the different approach of the ministers to the problem of the miracle. The group represents that worldly compromise which would make its doctrine tally with things as they are. Contrast the attitude of the majority with that of the earnest pastor who was staking his all upon the outcome of this one man's faith.

The finale is inevitable from a dramatic point of view. There is no solution for a problem so difficult and delicate, but the end is disappointing, leaving the reader with a sense that faith has been rebuked or, worse still, has had no basis. Was this the thought that killed Pastor Sang?

QUESTIONS ON Beyond Human Power

What is the real conflict of the play?

Which is the "star part"?

What caused the children's loss of faith?

Did Pastor Sang do wrong to force the issue?

Could he continue to heal others, doubting his power to help his own?

Is Björnson's picture of the church's attitude toward the miraculous a true one?

Does Elias show something of his father's sense of unreality?

Contrast Brand with Pastor Sang; Agnes with Clara.

Does Clara walk through faith in God or love of her husband?

Does religious faith or skepticism triumph in the end?

What, do you think, was the conclusion of Pastor Sang's unfinished sentence?

Are there barriers to love and faith beyond which human strength may not go?

Compare *Judah* by Henry Arthur Jones and *The Faith Healer* by William Vaughn Moody.

STRINDBERG: THE RISE OF NATURALISM

Such a personality as that of August Strindberg is sure to be the object of public curiosity. Probably Europe knows more about the neurasthenia and unfortunate matrimonial affairs of the great poet, dramatist, and novelist than it does of his works. Criticism has gone far when it learns to separate a man's life from his art and decides that his personal life belongs to himself and his God; his works only are the property of the world. Oscar Wilde, who had reasons of his own for the separation of his life and his art, wrote, "A critic should be taught to criticise a work of art without making any reference to the personality of the author."

A man who has been so acclaimed and so anathematized as Strindberg has in his work the elements of power. He has been called the Shakespeare of Sweden, the Lucifer of Intellect, the Spiritual Conscience of Sweden, and the Mad Genius; no doubt there was a good reason for each of these titles in the strange, brooding mind which dabbled in alchemy and investigated spiritualism and spent months in a mad-house.

Strindberg changed both the form and content of the drama. His most important contribution may be found in the five naturalistic plays dealing with the relations of the sexes: *The Father*, *Julie*, *Comrades*, *Creditors*, and *The Link*. These lie in the decade between 1887 and 1897.

He was a merciless dissector of the human soul, chiefly his

own soul. Like Walt Whitman he found himself easiest, cheapest, and nearest. There is not an agony of breaking nerves in all of his tragic situations that he has not felt. Every man's work, whether in art, literature, or music, is a portrait of himself. Goethe declared, "My works are one long confession"; and with even greater truth might Strindberg have said as much.

It was *Julie* which brought him his European fame; critics quite uniformly announced that a new thinker of power had come from out of the North. And it is *Julie* of which Huneker remarks: "Beside it *Ghosts* becomes mere entertainment for urchins. It is a tiny epic of hatred, the hatred of class against mass."

Strindberg has been called a "woman-hater" because he shows women in an extremely unpleasant light, the predatory female devouring the life of the man. He was, in the period of the woman-movement in Scandinavia, the one "anti," bitterly protesting against feminism.

I feel myself stirred by an angry need of resisting this enemy, inferior in intellect, but superior by her complete absence of moral sense.

A rank atheism permeates some of the novels and plays. He declares in *Inferno*, "I started out to search for God—and I found the devil." In later years the socialistic ideas for humanity were his highest creed. The right of every child to develop in untrammelled freedom is emphasized over and over again, as is the right also to be loved and desired. Strindberg touches no more wailing string than that of the unwanted child.

Abandoning types in his characterization, he accentuated that naturalism which had appeared in Ibsen and had been foretold by the French novelists. In realism, fact prevails over imagination; we have the actual presented without apology or interpretation: in naturalism, we have cross-sections of life in which the actors are apparently taken unaware at some crisis. It is not interpretation of life but

reproduction, and unfortunately its exponents prefer to reproduce disease rather than health, vice rather than virtue. For this sort of morbid dissection Strindberg had been admirably fitted by circumstances. Like Poe he could catch the horrors of his brain and transfer them to the written page.

STUDY OF The Father

In this play the battle for power between Man and Woman is fought unto the death. There is no shadowy land of compromise.

It is man and woman against each other incessantly.

The immediate object of their contention is the control of the child, whom the father wishes to educate away from home, and the mother wishes to retain.

In structure the play observes the unity of place throughout the three acts and is limited to twenty-four hours in time. Great economy is used in the naturalistic dialogue; "the skeleton which has been bleaching for years is built up from a few bare bones."

Among the characters both the Captain and Laura are abnormal, exaggerated for the sake of emphasis of the point.

The Captain is capable of great tenderness and affection but as obstinate in his way as Laura in hers. He remarks that he was "an unwanted child"; therefore his will is weak. Upon this weak will his wife deliberately plays. She thwarts his every plan and substitutes her own. He has ability and ambition for scientific study; she withholds the letters necessary to the completion of his life-work.

When I was about to stretch out my hand and gather in its fruits you suddenly cut off my arm.

His last slender thread of sanity snaps when Laura deliberately awakens doubt of the child's parentage. Within a few hours we witness all the terrible transformation of a char-

acter under suspicion which Shakespeare depicts in the broader scope of *Othello*. The ease with which doubt is awakened, and the tenacity with which the tortured mind clings to it in spite of all assurances, are demonstrated anew in the Captain's morbid attitude. He insists upon the truth, yet Laura truly says, "If I tell you it is not true, you will not be convinced; if I tell you it is true, you will be convinced." Only confirmation of the doubt can carry any weight to the diseased mind; against all assurances suspicion still prevails.

Now there are only shadows that hide themselves in the bushes, and stick their heads out to grin. A fatal reality would call forth resistance, nerve life and soul to action; but now my thoughts dissolve into thin air.

A groundless suspicion, as Strindberg so truly shows, can wreck life and happiness more swiftly and surely than a hideous reality which nerves the soul to action. Fighting shadows is a favorite and fatal pastime.

Turning to Laura, the woman in the case, what sort of woman could deliberately carry out so diabolical a scheme? We learn that she has always insisted upon her own way, more from love of power apparently than from desire of the point to be gained. She has never been a wife to the Captain by her own admission; thought of their physical union is repulsive to her. Some tenderness she had for him as of a mother for a big and helpless child.

The mother was your friend, but the woman was your enemy.

She voices Strindberg's own bitter thesis:

Love between the sexes is strife.

The weary Captain questions:

Whose is the fault? Perhaps it is the spiritual marriage! Formerly one married a wife, now one enters into partnership with a business woman, and then one cheats the partner. What becomes of love, healthy physical love? It dies in the meantime.

The man and the woman follow, consciously or unconsciously, the lines laid down, without compromise; it becomes a question of the survival of the stronger, and Laura is the stronger, either because she has no emotions, or because she has them under stricter control. There is no surrender; all through the drama there are down-turned thumbs indicating that the battle is to be unto the death. The horror of the closing scene, which is not surpassed in all literature, is echoed in the father's dying words:

A man has no children; it is only women who have children.

This play has been produced in Paris, Berlin, Copenhagen, Stockholm, London, and New York.

QUESTIONS ON *The Father*

What was the character of Laura's motherhood?

Was the Captain satisfactory as a father?

Was Laura's entire submission to the husband's will any more desirable than his yielding to her ideas?

Compare the situation in *A Doll's House*.

Does Strindberg's attitude toward feminism indicate that he would have been satisfied with equality of power and opportunity?

Was Laura the victim of circumstance, acting in defense of herself and her child?

Or was she with deliberate intention a murderess?

Where is the climax of the play?

Does the author acknowledge the unalterable bond between man and woman by letting the Captain die upon the old Nurse's breast?

What is the impression of the final scene?

Of what modern poet does Strindberg's characterization of Laura remind you?

Have the puritanic ideas concerning the relation of the sexes caused misery in marriage?

What is the real cause of the conflict in *The Father*?

Is the picture distorted or convincing?

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION UNDER THE SCANDINAVIAN GROUP

Ibsen's place in relation to the modern drama.

The theater of ideas.

Contrast the conflict of Greek tragedy with that of the modern play.

Which is greater in Ibsen, the artist or the propagandist?

Discuss the three periods of Ibsen's literary career.

The universality of Ibsen's characters.

His dialogue.

His central philosophy.

What is individualism?

Discuss his symbolism.

Was he a feminist?

Compare Björnson.

What is naturalism?

What type of modern drama does Björnson foreshadow?

What is Strindberg's attitude toward women?

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II

THE RUSSIAN DRAMA

We take it too easily for granted that every German must write ponderously, forgetting the winged words of Nietzsche; that every Spaniard must wallow in blood spilt at the behest of the point of honor, forgetting a Benavente who flouts all the canons of home-made and imported dramaturgy; that Russians must be morbid, what though Gogol's *Revizor* punctures the theory.

In literature nationalism is a term that requires extensive modification even in the minds of scholars, who forget the immense importance of that cross-fertilization which is always going on in the realm of ideas. And ideas have no country.

—*The Drama of Transition*, Isaac Goldberg

THE FORERUNNERS: PUSHKIN, GRIBOYEDOV AND GOGOL

OUT of the stern conditions and the primitive passions of the Russian race arose a drama antedating in some of its phases that of the Norwegians, a drama which outran the Norwegians in passionate social reform and carried naturalism beyond Ibsen and Strindberg. It was born, like the national drama of England, France, and Spain, from the Christian mysteries and their comic interludes. The first theater was built under Peter I, in 1702, and by the middle of the eighteenth century it had become a permanent establishment. Much of the early drama of Russia is imitative and uninteresting from the student's point of view. It shows the influence of the French, especially Molière.

Here, as elsewhere in the study of national movements, we find a few forerunners, eclipsed by their successors, but lighting their paths in no uncertain way. Such prophets of a new day were Pushkin, Griboyedov, and Gogol.

Griboyedov (1795–1829) in his short space of thirty-four years perfected a prose style and enriched the Russian lan-

guage and literature. He left a drama which is still one of the choicest productions of the Little State Theater of Moscow. It is variously translated as *Misunderstanding through Intelligence*, also as *The Sorrows of the Spirit*, and by other titles which fail to express the Russian original completely.

What Griboyedov accomplished with prose, Pushkin, whose brief span of thirty-five years fell within the first half of the nineteenth century, accomplished through the medium of poetry. This poet and dramatist made it possible for those who came after him to discard the pompous and artificial literary style and deal directly with the stuff of life. Pushkin was a realist in the best sense, and he antedates Ibsen by a generation. The Russian poet fell in a duel when the great Norwegian was but nine years of age.

Gogol (1809-52) is best known as a novelist, particularly as the creator of *Dead Souls*; but he gave to the literature of his country one comedy which has been a model for later Russian drama. *The Inspector-General* with its dramatic quality, lively humor, and clever characterization still holds the stage not only in Russia but in foreign countries. It was produced in America recently by the Yale Dramatic Association. Gogol has had great influence upon Russian literature.

It is difficult to realize the restrictions upon creative art in Russia. Griboyedov was forbidden the stage and imprisoned, and saw many of his friends sent to Siberia; Pushkin was exiled and Turgenev banished from Moscow for writing an obituary tribute to Gogol. Gogol came under the influence of the Pietists, and during the last ten years of his life he repudiated his own work and tried to destroy it. The greatest works were forbidden publication and were accessible only in the manuscripts lovingly and laboriously copied by loyal disciples. That the drama lived and developed under such conditions proves that it was more than a mere pastime; it afforded expression for the suffering soul of an oppressed and troubled people.

RUSSIAN REALISM: OSTROVOSKY, TURGENEV, AND TOLSTOY

Ostrovosky (1823-86) left about fifty dramas, all of which are capable of production. His plays, of which *The Storm* is best known, abandoned the ancient idea of the expiation of guilt and the conflict of good and evil. They discarded the villain and the inevitable ending, often leaving the problem unsolved and the conclusion indeterminate. Fore-shadowing the magnificent ensemble of the modern Russian stage, there are no minor parts in Ostrovosky's plays. Each of his characters is worthy of study. The plays are realistic; life itself passes before the audience in petty detail, and out of its commonplace a drama grows quite unconsciously.

The work of Pushkin, Griboyedov, and Gogol remained unknown to Europe, but Turgenev and Tolstoy surmounted the barriers of language and made for Russian literature an international fame. They are both better known in literary forms other than the drama. Turgenev's novels cover a period of more than thirty years of the nineteenth century, a period the darkest of Russia's history. He left five comedies which are well known in Russia. Count Alexei Tolstoy left a trilogy of historical subjects, one of which is a favorite in the repertory of the Moscow Art Theater; his work must not be confused with that of his cousin, Count Leo Tolstoy, whose *Power of Darkness* was produced in many lands in the formative period of the modern drama and is one of the three Russian plays which strongly influenced later movements. The other two were *The Lower Depths* by Maxim Gorky and *The Cherry Orchard* by Anton Tchekov.

Arthur Hopkins, in his introduction to *Redemption*, says, "Utterly disregarding effect, technique or method, Tolstoy has explored his own soul and there touched hands with countless other souls, and since he has trod the path of millions who will come after him, the mementos of his journey will be long sought." *Redemption*, or *The Man Who Was Dead*, as it is often translated, is one of the best known of Tolstoy's dramas. It was put on by Mr. Hopkins at the

Plymouth Theater, New York, in 1918-19 with Mr. John Barrymore as Fedya. Those who see in the play merely the powerlessness of the law to deal with certain complications of life miss the deeper meaning which is expressed by the title, *Redemption*—the spiritual regeneration of the “man who was dead,” in spite of his physical degeneration. *The Fruits of Culture* is an amusing bit dealing with the superstition of spiritualism in the upper classes.

Because Tolstoy is so much greater than any one medium of expression his works are read in all languages by all classes and all nations. About his personality and work a mass of criticism and interpretation has accumulated, but for the purpose of the drama a study of *The Power of Darkness*, a naturalistic tragedy of misery and ignorance, is recommended.

STUDY OF *The Power of Darkness*

The theme is the power of evil to coil itself more and more closely about the victim, making escape impossible. The play is a study of Russian peasant life, where ignorance and stupid misery cause the tragedy, rather than inherent vice. The power of money to destroy the soul is a strong motive of the drama. The power of darkness is that weight upon the soul which drags it down. In the words of old Akim:

Sin fastens on to sin—drags sin after it and you’ve stuck fast,
Nikita, in sin.

You’re in a net, Nikita!

In structure the play is an example of extreme naturalism, antedating Hauptmann’s *Before Sunrise* and no doubt largely influencing the German dramatist’s style. Note the fall of Nikita in the first act, which leads to the tragic conclusion. “If a claw is caught the bird is lost,” philosophizes the old peasant father; and in the opening act we behold the claw caught when Nikita repudiates the girl who loves him for a guilty intrigue and swears falsely. In the second act

Anisya, whose "claw has also been caught in the trap" through her guilty love, goes from adultery to murder. From one guilty love to another is but a step, and another murder to cover up sin becomes necessary. The whole of the bird is now hopelessly caught and mangled. Dullness and despair overcome Nikita, and he goes to confession and death.

If we were permitted villains in naturalistic drama, the old crone Matronya is a female villain. She reveals the strongest will in the play, inciting the others to evil and feeling no weakness or remorse. Anisya is selfish, lustful, sordid, and greedy, but would never of herself have been so bold an aggressor. If we were permitted a *raisonneur* in a Russian naturalistic play, which we are not, Mitritch, who looks on and comments upon the destruction he is powerless to avert, might well be that discarded and useful type. Old Akim, inarticulate and uncouth, is yet deeply aware of the power of God and the necessity of keeping the soul alive. When he sees that his son has lost his soul through love of money and evil living, he leaves him until the time of repentance comes at last. Lest we should think the peasant women exaggerated in their brutality, Tolstoy puts into the mouth of Mitritch this statement:

A peasant woman—what is she? Just mud! There are many millions of you in Russia and all as blind as moles. As she grows up so she dies! Never sees anything, never hears anything. A peasant,—he may learn something at the pub, or maybe in prison, or the army—but a woman! They are like blind puppies, creeping about and poking their noses into the dung-heap.

This is the power of darkness which covers their existence from the cradle to the grave.

The Power of Darkness has often been produced in England and on the Continent, especially in the early years of the naturalistic movement. It has largely influenced the drama of Europe. It was produced by the Theater Guild of New York in 1920.

QUESTIONS ON The Power of Darkness

Where does the downward course begin with Nikita?

What was the turning-point with Anisya?

Has this play a hero? A heroine? A villain? A *raisonneur*?

Is the development forced at any point, or does it seem the inevitable consequence of what has gone before?

Is the ignorance and the stupid misery of the peasant women exaggerated?

What was the motive which actuated Matronya to her evil deeds?

What was Tolstoy's attitude toward money?

Note the arraignment of extortion and usury in the speech of Akim in Act Three.

What does the author mean by the "power of darkness"?

LEADERS OF THE MODERN MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA: TCHEKOV,
GORKY, ANDREYEV

Tchekov: The Drama of Despondency

Anton Tchekov (1860-1904) has been called, quite aptly, "the dramatist of despondency." The gloom which permeates his work is probably from two sources: the apathy of life in Russia in the last years of the nineteenth century, and his own ill-health, which exiled him to Crimea. He was educated as a physician, which explains his keen insight into physical and mental conditions, amounting at times to a clinical diagnosis; it also explains his kindly characterization of the family doctor, as in Astroff of *Uncle Vanya*.

His plays all reflect the gray and tedious life of the intelligentsia stagnating in the provincial towns of Russia. With no outlet for their energies, they spend their time in frivolous wasting of their inheritance, drinking vodka, and making love. Sometimes it is money which is the root of all evil with Tchekov; again it is unhappy love. There is a sub-

the mingling of laughter and tears in his early work; in the later dramas tears predominate.

No other dramatist has so succeeded in concentrating the Russia of his time into the fleeting glimpses of commonplace lives and trivial conversations. No dramatist has been more fortunate in his interpretation. The name of Tchekov and that of the Moscow Art Theater which produced and still produces his plays are inseparably linked together. The method of interpretative realism used by the great Russian director Stanislavsky is exactly suited to the moods of Tchekov.

Strangely enough, *The Swan Song*, with its suggestion of the close of a career and the futility of the artist's life, was the earliest play, appearing in 1889. In the same year came *Ivanoff*, a protest against a play which had been given in Moscow. It was written at great speed and aroused much discussion.

The Sea-Gull, which made the reputation of the Moscow Art Theater, was adopted as their insignia. This play is extremely interesting because it embodies the strife between the new and old forms of art. The analysis of the writer, Trigeron, and the struggle of the younger generation to gain a foothold among the established artists of a passing day contains a reflection of Tchekov's own conflict with convention and precedent.

The Three Sisters, produced in 1901, is the gloomiest picture of provincial life which the dramatist has given us. The dullness and drabness of the atmosphere are lit up by occasional flashes of passion.

Uncle Vanya, another picture of country life among the intelligentsia, with a thread of unhappy love running through it, is redeemed by the beauty of the closing scene with its quiet resignation:

What can we do? We must live our lives. We shall live through the long procession of days before us and the long evenings—and we shall rest. We shall see all evil and pain sink into the great

compassion that shall enfold the world. Our life will be as peaceful and tender and sweet as a caress. I have faith. . . .

You have never known what happiness was, but wait, Uncle Vanya, wait! We shall rest.

The Cherry Orchard was produced in 1904, and later in the same year its author passed away suddenly. It was written while he was very ill. "I do four lines a day with intolerable anguish," Tchekov wrote a friend. It is generally considered his greatest play and has been produced more than four hundred times by the Moscow Art Theater; it is seldom out of their repertory.

Efros, a Russian critic, says: "It would be idle to measure exactly whether Tchekov did more for the Art Theater or the Art Theater for Tchekov. The Art Theater would not be what it is if it had not been for *The Sea-Gull* and *Uncle Vanya*. It is equally true that without the Art Theater, Tchekov would not have written *The Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard* as dramas.

STUDY OF *The Cherry Orchard*

"The old order changeth, giving place to new" is essentially the theme of *The Cherry Orchard*. We see commercialism replacing the old aristocratic idealism. It is a picture of a particular family, lovable and improvident, but referring to the disintegration of the old civilization. Compare with *Heartbreak House* by George Bernard Shaw. The motive running through the whole is passionate love of locality.

In structure the play is passive and has no direct plot. It might be termed a drama of situation. An impoverished family is about to lose its inheritance. It is pictured at the moment of the loss, trying to cover pain with foolish gaiety, and refusing to understand the conditions. Note the dramatic effect of the sound of the broken string in Act Two and its recurrence at the close; also the pity and almost terror

invoked by the sound of the ax upon the falling trees. The death of the old servant in the empty house is almost unbearably poignant.

As the play is given by the Moscow players there are no stars in *The Cherry Orchard*; or rather all are stars, for no prominence is given to any particular character. Madame Ranévsky and her brother are types of the generous and improvident intellectuals who live aimless and futile lives, flinging sovereigns to tramps while their servants starve, making sentimental speeches about their home but unwilling to sacrifice for it.

Lopákhin is the pushing commercial type, risen rapidly from serfdom to power and exulting in his new authority. Ánya and Trophímof represent youth with a vision for the future. They sound the note of hope:

All Russia is our garden. It is so plain that before we can live in the present we must redeem the past and have done with it; and it is only by suffering we can redeem it, only by strenuous, unremitting toil.

I feel the approach of happiness, Ánya, I see it coming. . . . And if we do not see it, if we do not know it, what does it matter? Others will see it.

The play was first produced by the Moscow Art Theater in 1904. It has been given in the most important theaters of Europe and is one of the three Russian plays most influential in modern drama. It was given in New York last season with six of the original cast in the rôles which they created. Kenneth Macgowan says, "Such perfection as the rendering of *The Cherry Orchard* by the Moscow Art Theater is a rare thing for which we pay with hours of the commonplace; it drenches us with a mystic sense of existence."

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

What is the strongest motive of *The Cherry Orchard*?

Has it a distinct plot?

Has it a star part?

If you were picking out a *raisonneur*, whom would you select?

What does the passing of the cherry orchard represent?

Discuss the conditions of life among the intelligentsia as described by Trophímof.

Discuss the conditions of the peasants revealed in Tchekov's plays.

Why was the period one of gloom and despair in Russia?

Does the death of Fir symbolize the passing of the old aristocratic order?

What is the significance of the sound of the broken string?

Comment upon the dramatic effect of the sound of the ax in the close.

Would you say that the play is in its totality pessimistic or optimistic?

Gorky: The Drama of the Disinherited

Maxim Gorky (b. 1868) marks the culmination of the drama of naturalism, not only in Russia, but in the modern movement. His work has been largely influential in shaping the methods of other men wherever his remarkable drama of despair, *The Lower Depths*, has been presented.

The real name of this "bitter voice of Russia" is Alexei Pyeshkov. His early career reminds one of that of the English poet John Masefield, who has also written of the submerged class. Orphaned at nine by a cholera epidemic, he tried various occupations unsuccessfully. He was assistant cook on a Volga steamer, and as Masefield devoured Chaucer in the moments he could snatch from dish-washing and paring potatoes, so the young Pyeshkov devoured a few of Shakespeare's plays which happened to be on the ship. He longed for a university education but found it beyond his reach and took to tramping.

The dramas which Maxim Gorky has written are but the transcriptions of his own soul's tragedy. We have had many poets, novelists, and dramatists who have tried for a

time the life of an outcast for the sake of their art, but usually with money in their pockets for emergencies. With Gorky his tramping was a deadly reality; he was himself one of the disinherited whom he describes in *The Lower Depths*.

Although his literary work brought him fame and money, he exposed the cancerous sores of society too candidly, and exile and persecution became his lot. James G. Huneker says: "Compared to Gorky's rank, unsavory, but sincere notation of facts, Thomas de Quincey's charming narrative is an idyll. Zola, who posed all his lifetime as the father of naturalism in literature, might have gone to school to learn the alphabet of his art at the knees of Maxim Gorky. For years I have searched for the last word in dramatic naturalism, and in Gorky's *Nachtsyl* (*Lower Depths*) I have found it."

STUDY OF *The Lower Depths*

The Russian title literally means *At the Bottom*. It is variously translated, *The Submerged*, *Night Lodging*, and *The Lower Depths*.

The theme is the study of the dregs of life which society disregards; living, they are below society's dead-line. But beneath the wretched exterior of these miserable beings, huddled for shelter like vermin in a tenement basement, there lingers a spark of the divine which flares up for a moment under the inspiration of the pilgrim's faith, then sinks into deeper despair. They cannot rise above the submerged condition to which society has consigned them. Note that *The Passing of the Third Floor Back* is the same theme treated romantically. In both dramas Truth seeks to penetrate the artificial exteriors and find the dormant soul, but in the Russian slums the end is an appalling gloom which purges the beholder by pity and terror. There is no more hopeless and haunting theme in all literature than the song of the submerged in Gorky's *Lower Depths*:

The sun it rises and it sets.
In my prison darkness reigns.
Day and night the warders go, alas! alas!
Pacing underneath my windows.

Oh, my chains, my heavy chains,
You're my watchman forged of iron.
I can't take you off and rend you, alas! alas!
My soul is tired, my spirit broken.

Sunbeams never find me here.
Song of birds I have forgot.
My heart it withers like the flowers, alas! alas!
I wish my eyes would cease to see.

It is impossible to analyze the fragile plot and dissect the motives of such a play. The very acme of naturalism, it presents life and passes on. Human wrecks in rags and filth and misery, coughing, cursing, dying, roused for a moment to hope by the words of a stranger who understands them better than they understand themselves. Who is this stranger? What does it matter? He is just one who understands.

As for the characterization, Gorky is his own hero. When Sahtin rises from his boards and delivers his oration upon the freedom of man, it is Gorky who speaks. Among these miserable characters who have lost the sense of morality in the minor relations of life and show neither resentment nor surprise at the vicious deeds going on about them, the girl, Natasha, mixture of good and evil impulses, shines like a star by comparison. Note the indifference with which they quarrel at cards while the soul of Anna is passing, and the closing scene where the song is interrupted by the announcement that the actor has hanged himself. They stop just long enough to grumble:

He has spoiled our song . . . the fool.

Note that each of the characters clings to some illusion.

Luka, the Pilgrim, is an enigma. Is he a sincere searcher after truth or a trickster assuming the garb of a pilgrim to promote his mendicant career? He has compassion and understanding, one who passes by and roams ever afar in search of new truths.

This play has held the attention of Europe very frequently and was produced in America by Arthur Hopkins in 1919. It was produced by the Moscow Art Theater in 1902-03 and is a favorite in their repertory. Only Russian actors can successfully interpret the Russian slums.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Why is it difficult to analyze *The Lower Depths*?

What has been its influence upon modern drama?

Compare it with Masefield's *Tragedy of Nan* and *Everlasting Mercy*.

Compare it with *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*.

Which is truer to life?

Compare with Ibsen's *Wild Duck* in reference to the power of illusions.

Does Luka, the pilgrim, represent Truth or Light in search of Beauty?

Compare with Maeterlinck's treatment of Light in *The Blue Bird* and *Betrothal*.

Why is the effect of this naturalistic play similar to that of Greek tragedy?

Andreyev: The Drama of Human Destiny

No greater contrast in some respects could be found than that which exists in the lives and achievements of Maxim Gorky and Leonid Andreyev, who have been by turns in the center of the Russian stage for the last quarter of a century. Andreyev is the product of civilization and culture; Gorky is primitive and elemental. The art of Andreyev is subtle, built upon the foundation of the past; he cares little for real-

ism in itself, using it when it suits his purpose but resorting to mysticism and symbolism and evolving creatures of his imagination to interpret his ideas. In his attitude toward social problems he is as boldly aggressive as Gorky. *The Red Laugh* is an attack upon war through a picture of the horrors of the Russian and Japanese conflict. In *Savva* there is a naturalistic picture of revolutionary Russia.

Leonid Andreyev (1871-1919) was but three years younger than Gorky, but his work has come to the attention of America largely since the translation and production of one of his latest plays, *He Who Gets Slapped*, while Gorky is known best by the work of his early years.

Andreyev, while sometimes turning to social problems, as in *The Red Laugh*, *Savva*, and again in *King Hunger*, is more concerned with the significance of life and death. Man's senseless struggle and his relation to an indifferent universe are the motives of *To the Stars*, of *The Life of Man*, and, in a subtler way, of *He Who Gets Slapped*. To reach out and read the riddle of the universe, to solve the problem of human destiny, this is always the longing behind the drama of Andreyev. To give body to his ideas he uses abnormal and eccentric characters or dim forms that do not pretend to reality; to give substance to his thoughts he uses shades of feeling that almost transcend human expression. He sometimes presents the same idea several times under various forms. His characters are lonely, beaten by life, but after all in a paradoxical way triumphant. Man refuses to be a failure, although death ends a life which has not revealed its meaning.

STUDY OF *The Life of Man*

The theme is the depiction of a man's life from birth to death, attended constantly by inexorable destiny. He is born, loves, suffers poverty, rises to prominence and wealth, suffers misfortune, and dies alone. The theme is best expressed by the question, What is the meaning of it all? To

answer this question the author would need to solve the mystery of eternity.

The unfoldment of the play defies dramatic precedent. In a prologue the entire sequence of events is revealed, leaving no element of suspense or surprise. The use of the supernatural is extremely effective. Some One in Gray and the shadowy silhouettes of old women with nodding grotesque bonnets create an atmosphere of superstitious fear, predicting tragedy in the opening events and fulfilling it in the final scene. Note the dramatic device of the burning candle. The dialogue is especially worthy of study in this play. By the apparently irrelevant and aimless conversation of a group in each scene the audience is acquainted with all that has happened to man in the interval. From the old women and the relatives in the birth-chamber, from the neighbors in the second scene, from the guests at the ball, and finally from the drunkards in the finale we gather up all the intervening threads. Why is this varied by having a single old woman relate to herself the story of Man's misfortune? Does it accentuate his loneliness and the emptiness of the rooms that this single old servant should mumble the tale to herself?

Who is Some One in Gray? As nearly as we can express the idea, he seems to represent the indifference of the universe to man's joy or sorrow: to put it in a single title, we may call him human destiny; he is Man's constant companion.

Man is but the ordinary type of humanity, "born to sorrow as the sparks fly upward." He is evidently intended to represent the usual course of human existence. He is born with a cry; his candle burns brightly in the joy of youth, but it is consumed in the process. "Troubled by premonitions, agitated by hope and fear, he will submissively complete the iron-traced circle ordained. Coming from the night, he will return to the night and go out, leaving no trace behind." Just the ordinary course of human life. Man's Wife, who is his faithful squire girding him for battle,

is but the ordinary loving woman denying her own pain to spare her beloved; Man's Child is but the joyous type of irresponsible youth around which the hearts of the old cling to their breaking; Man's relatives are the usual rather unsatisfactory supports in emergencies; Man's guests are as ready to censure as to praise and partake of his cheer. This is no special pleading for a particular case but a presentation of the universal and eternal. The only thing which is indeterminate about the career of Man is whether he was, in the mind of his creator, after all a failure. He never cringed to destiny but died uttering defiance and calling for his squire and sword. Whether he was the plaything of fate or the superman surmounting every obstacle and defying destiny is a question which our knowledge of eternal truth does not permit us to solve. The face of the dead man remains bright; he is unconquered still.

The Life of Man has been produced recently by the Harvard Dramatic Club. It has also been given by the Washington Square Players. It is often given in Russia.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

What is the significance of Some One in Gray?

Are the events of Man's life intended to be typical?

Compare the dialogue with Maeterlinck; with Barrie's undifferentiated conversations.

Compare the use of the supernatural with that of the Greek tragedies.

Discuss the dramatic use of the dialogue of the various groups.

Is there any significance in the fact that Man dies in a saloon?

Would the tragedy have been the same if he had died in his own house with his relatives for chorus?

Is Man a failure? Compare the end of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. The disillusion of *Chantecler*.

SUMMARY

While the movements were going on almost simultaneously in Norway and Russia, the Scandinavian came first to its culmination and died away, while the Russian has gone steadily on amid the destruction and despair of revolution. While there has been no central figure upon the stage since the death of Andreyev, production and translation have gone right on and extended the fame of Russia's great names. To understand the hold of the serious drama upon a people sufficient to keep their theaters open through revolution and counter-revolution, one must realize that with the Russians it is not a pastime but a spiritual discipline. Their drama was born out of their sorrow, and they turn to it for interpretation of the problems of their troubled lives.

The recent "Russian invasion" has taught America much. The average American goes to the theater to be amused, and in times of strain and stress he desires his amusement to be as frivolous as possible. Therefore in America, during the war, serious drama was crowded from the stage. It was quite otherwise in Russia. There the Moscow Art Theater was sold out for Ibsen, Hauptmann, Gorky, Tolstoy, and Tchekov, while the lighter shows went to the wall. The stern and gloomy Russian in the midst of hunger and sorrow and privation seeks consolation in the contemplation of those tragedies which have purified and exalted the souls of men.

The Moscow Art Theater permits of no applause and uses no music between acts; nothing is allowed to break the illusion of life. In no other country is the study of the drama so closely linked with a study of the theater. Production and creation have gone hand in hand, and the result has been the most vital and intense dramatic expression of our time.

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS AVAILABLE IN TRANSLATION

Leo Tolstoy: *The Power of Darkness*, *The Man Who Was Dead* (*The Living Corpse*, or *Redemption*)

In a single volume of the *Modern Reader's Library* (Boni & Liveright)

Maxim Gorky: *The Lower Depths* (*Submerged, or Night-Lodging*)

Published by Richard Badger, Boston, with introduction by Henry Schnitzke

Anton Tchekov: *The Sea-Gull, Uncle Vanya*

In *Representative Continental Dramas* (Little, Brown & Co.)

Published together with *The Swan Song* and *Ivanoff* in a single volume by Charles Scribner's Sons

The Cherry Orchard, Chief Contemporary Dramatists, Vol. I (Houghton Mifflin Co.)

Leonid Andreyev: *Savva, The Life of Man*

In one volume (Little, Brown & Co.)

He Who Gets Slapped (Brentano's)

REFERENCES FOR SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY

The Russian Theater, Oliver Sayler (Brentano's). A personal investigation of the Russian Theater in 1917 and 1918, vividly portrayed. Tchekov, the Moscow Art Theater, Monodrama, etc., are fully treated.

For the work of Everinov and the Monodrama see also *Drama in Transition* by Isaac Goldberg (D. Appleton & Co.).

Ideals and Realities in Russian Literature, P. Kropotkin (Alfred A. Knopf).

See magazine articles on Moscow Art Theater during the American visit (1923).

See poem, *The Moscow Art Theater*, by John Weaver (*Literary Digest*, March, 1923).

See poem, *Portrait of a Russian Novelist: Gogol*, by Marya Zaturensky (*The Bookman*, February, 1923).

See burlesque on the Russian drama by Stephen Leacock in *Over the Footlights* (Dodd, Mead & Co.).

Moscow Art Theater Plays, translated by Jennie Covan (Brentano's). This volume contains *The Lower Depths*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Three Sisters*, and one play by Alexei Tolstoy.

Leonid Andreyev: A Critical Study, Alexander Kaun (B. W. Huebsch).

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OF RUSSIAN DRAMA

What is the characteristic racial expression of the Russians?

Discuss the rise and growth of the Russian Theater.

The restrictions upon creative art in Russia.

The beginning of Russian realism.

The international influence of Count Leo Tolstoy; of Maxim Gorky.

The Moscow Art Theater.

Its relation to Tchekov.

The recent visit to America.

Contrast the attitude of America and that of Russia toward art.

What contemporary novelist has been called an "American Gorky"? Why?

Compare Russian and Scandinavian realism.

What is naturalism, and how does the naturalism of Scandinavian, Russian, and German drama compare in point of time?

ACT TWO

IN WHICH FRANCE AND GERMANY PLAY A PART

I. MODERN FRENCH DRAMA

What is a tragedy? It is a play every part of which aims to create suspense, deep thinking, and pity. It is accompanied no longer, as of old, by magnificent draperies; it is a thing of the day, logical, prosaic, no longer bloody . . . The ways of fate are no longer manifested, as with the Greeks, in dreams, visions or presentiments. Nowadays we try to show how the struggle for existence bears down inexorably upon those who are imprudent, too weak to defend themselves, those whose passions are stronger than their will-power.

—Paul Hervieu

FRENCH REALISM: BECQUE, BRIEUX, HERVIEU

*Henri Becque: Foundations of the
New Theater (1837–1900)*

“LITERATURE makes itself despite critics, it is ever in advance of critics,” remarked Henri Becque, and his life and work illustrate that remark. Few men have been more heroic under discouragement than he, but he succeeded where others had failed in making secure the fortunes of the new dramatic school. For three decades, between 1850 and 1880 the artificial plays of Augier and Dumas *fils* held the French stage; as Alfred de Musset put it:

We prefer some drama *à la mode*,
Where the intrigue inextricably bound
Swings like a toy, the same mechanic round.

Contemporary with the naturalistic treatment of the novel-

ists, Flaubert and the Goncourt brothers, this drama was felt to be quite inadequate as a representation of life. Zola attempted to put his precepts into practice by writing *Thérèse Raquin*, the first naturalistic tragedy. It was not a successful play. It was really Guy de Maupassant who prepared the way for the modern French theater. In order to understand the difference between the work of Scribe, Augier, and Dumas, and that of Becque and his followers—a difference great enough to warrant the name of “the new school” or “new theater”—careful comparison should be made of representative plays from each writer. *Olympe’s Marriage*, one of the most modern of Augier’s plays, may be chosen, or *The House of Forchambault*. Compare the use of coincidence, mechanical contrivances, and asides, especially in the latter play, with the unity and economy of *Les Corbeaux* or *L’Amoreuse* (*The Loving Wife*) of Porto-Riche.

When Henri Becque finally forced himself into the theater it was the triumph of realism over romanticism. By 1885 the “well-made play” was discredited in France. In 1887 the opening of the Théâtre Libre insured production for the new ventures and introduced Ibsen and Tolstoy to France.

STUDY OF *Les Corbeaux*

Les Corbeaux is variously translated *The Crows*, *Ravens*, or *Vultures*. Upon the death of a good-natured and bourgeois father, his widow and three daughters are preyed upon by unscrupulous associates. The youngest and fairest daughter sells herself to the most unscrupulous of the vultures to save the rest of the family. Huneker calls *Les Corbeaux* the Bible of the dramatic realists.

The structure of the drama was retained but much of the useless trapping was removed. There is no trickery or mechanical device. The story unfolds quite naturally. The author does not, as did Dumas *filis*, introduce his own ideas into the play. He is impersonal in his treatment. He discards the lengthy exposition of his predecessors and opens his

play well in the middle of the action. He uses the unemphatic ending.

We cannot do better than to take the words of James Huneker in regard to the characters: "His major quality is his gift of lifelike characterization. Character with him is of prime importance. Every character is a portrait."

Becque is cold, cynical, and pessimistic and he took full toll when his time came for the criticism which had withheld his work for so long from the theater. To quote once more from *Iconoclasts*: "France is becoming weary of cynical sinners—yet this does not invalidate the high ranking of this man of genius. Whatever may be his deficiencies in the purely spiritual, Henri Becque will ever remain a commanding figure in the battalion of brilliant French dramatists."

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

The Vultures (1882)

The Woman of Paris (1885)

The Merry-Go-Round (1878)

In *Modern Drama Series* (Little, Brown & Co.)

Eugène Brieux: The Thesis Play

In his preface to *Three Plays by Brieux*, Mr. Bernard Shaw declares: "After the death of Ibsen, Brieux confronted Europe as the most important dramatist west of Russia. In that kind of comedy which is so true to life that we have to call it tragi-comedy, and which is not only an entertainment but a history and criticism of contemporary morals, he is incomparably the greatest writer France has produced since Molière. In the great 'comedy of humanity' played for the amusement of the gods rather than that of the French public, there is no summit in the barren plain that stretches from Mount Molière to our own times until we reach Brieux."

Monsieur Brioux began his dramatic career as a naturalist, but soon his artistic sense and dramatic instinct became subordinate to the passion for social reform, and most of his plays are "pamphlets" against some evil of society. The hypocrisy of middle-class morality is especially attacked. As Mr. Shaw characteristically remarks, "His fisticuffs are not aimed heavenward: they fall on human noses for the good of human souls." The three plays best known in America, *Maternity*, *Damaged Goods*, and *The Three Daughters of Monsieur Dupont*, were censored in both France and England when first attempted; but later French censorship was abolished and the Stage Society undertook the production in England. Why a play like *Damaged Goods* should be censored and the adultery and intrigue of the popular play permitted is a question; it seems to be the result of certain taboos. There were certain things which might not be discussed, and these plays treated them very frankly. To quote Mr. Shaw again, "The censorship did what it always does: it left the poison on the table and carefully locked up the antidote."

The undeniable power of Monsieur Brioux has suffered from his zeal as a reformer. The dramatist is ever under the tutelage of the preacher.

The Three Daughters of Monsieur Dupont is an arraignment of the marriage of convenience and an exposition of the pitiable situation of unmarried women unassured of suitable dowry. Compare with the Huxtable sisters in *Madras House*. The evils of loveless marriage in the one case, the utter loneliness of another, and the immoral life of the third are pitilessly exposed. The play ends without either of the conventional terminations. It gives neither death nor a happy reconciliation, just a drab resignation to the inevitable, which, after all, is life.

Maternity strikes at the dual evil of propagating the unfit and society's condemnation of motherhood outside of marriage. The same good doctor is the protagonist in this play and in *Damaged Goods*. Monsieur Brioux borrows from

himself quite frequently; one of the scenes in the later version of *Maternity* duplicates the scene between Julie and Antonin in *The Three Daughters of Monsieur Dupont*. The modern demand for the regulation of propagation is voiced in no uncertain terms in *Maternity*.

Damaged Goods is more of a tract than the other two in its denunciation of the ignorance and crime surrounding the evils known as "the social diseases." The subject is treated with humanity, and the good doctor arraigns as bitterly the man who has escaped by luck as the victim of disease. Brieux shows us that we must go deeper than legislation, registration, and segregation; we must go down to the root of the matter, a false social and economic condition based upon ignorance.

All of the plays of Monsieur Brieux leave the audience with the uncomfortable sense of a conflict in which somehow it is personally involved. He leaves the problem and a sense of personal responsibility for the solution. His plays have large social and moral significance, but in the proportion that they become didactic they become uninteresting as dramatic art. *The Red Robe* (*La Robe Rouge*, 1900) is recommended for critical study since it more than any other is free from the violations of artistic sense and craftsmanship which characterize the thesis plays of Brieux.

STUDY OF *The Red Robe*

The theme is an arraignment of the French system of criminal justice, both in relation to the prisoner at bay and the magistrates who are concerned in the administration. Note the pathetic irony of the title, *The Red Robe*, symbolizing a distinction which was never won by Monsieur Vagret and the dramatic effect of the secret trying on of the red robe.

Note how the injustice of the law is brought out by action and compare with *Damaged Goods* or *Maternity* in which the thesis is set forth by means of long speeches. Which is more effective? How would the plot suffer if Yanetta were not

brought in? What does the incident of the placid old mother, so sure of securing justice, add?

MOTHER: But I always heard that justice was free in France!

LA BOUZULE: So it is, but the means to obtain it are sometimes expensive; that is all.

Although some of the lawyers are conscientious and others frankly unscrupulous, the mysterious malady has attacked them all. The malady which makes bad judges out of so many decent people is the madness for advancement. They all have it, and Acts One and Two reveal the extent to which it has eaten into their wholesome lives. Knowing that preferment depends upon success in prosecuting, they become keen to convict. Vagret reproaches himself:

At first I had a feeling of joy when I saw the judge in his examination leave all these little facts in the background! Ah, that's the trade! Do you understand, the trade! . . .

It was a contest of orators, a competition between comedians—I must come out victorious at any price. That's what a magistrate is!

Etchepare and Yanetta with their personal tragedy brought to a focus by the injustice of the law, which failed to forget that which had been expiated, finds its culmination in Yanetta's despairing cry:

Look at your work, all you wicked judges: of an innocent man you almost made a criminal, and of an honest woman, a mother, you have made a murderess!

The murder story with which the play starts is never solved. The author takes no pains to tell us whether Etchepare was really guilty or, if not, who was. That is not the point; the point is that, guilty or innocent, his life was wrecked in the investigation together with that of his wife. In *Damaged Goods* we are not told whether the baby lived or whether Henriette returned to her husband. The particular

case does not matter; it is the universal problem back of the case that counts.

The Red Robe was given in Paris in 1900, with Madame Réjane in the part of Yanetta.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

What is the dual arraignment of the theme?

Contrast the development of the plot with that in *Damaged Goods*.

What is the irony of the title?

Would an earlier playwright have cleared up the murder mystery?

What is the meaning of the line, "They were acquitted, it is true, but they were sentenced for all that?"

Is the stamp scene superfluous? If not, what is its significance?

Contrast the character of Mouzon with that of Vagret.

Is Yanetta convincing and the tragic close inevitable?

Note the ironic effect of Vagret's reiterated comment, "You can't beat that combination!"

Is the trial of a prisoner still a contest of orators, a competition of comedians?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

Artists' Families (1890), *Drama League Series* (Doubleday, Page & Co.).

The Red Robe (1900), *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

The Three Daughters of Monsieur Dupont (1899), in *Three Plays by Brieux*, preface by Bernard Shaw (Brentano's).

Damaged Goods (1902), in *Three Plays by Brieux*, preface by Bernard Shaw (Brentano's).

Maternity (1904), in *Three Plays by Brieux*, preface by Bernard Shaw (Brentano's).

La Foi (False Gods), 1910 (Brentano's).

Paul Hervieu: The Drama of Moral Ideas

The names of Hervieu and Brioux are very often linked together, but no contemporary dramatists present a sharper contrast, although they were both concerned primarily with ideas. Monsieur Brioux is lavish and prodigal in his treatment; Monsieur Hervieu is characterized by economy and restraint. Brioux deals with the social problems of his day, Hervieu with those more universal moral conceptions which form the basis of our civilization. Of Hervieu's eleven plays all but three deal with moral conceptions, and six with problems of marital inconstancy and adjustment.

Although an avowed feminist, Monsieur Hervieu betrays no partizanship in his depiction of the man and the woman in conflict; neither does he ever present a bald thesis or tract. His doctrine is the paramount thing in the play rather than the creation of character. His style is that of classic simplicity; nothing unnecessary to the progress of the theme is permitted, no enrichment of character, or embellishment of incident.

The earliest play, *Les Paroles Restent*, deals with the power of scandal and the impossibility of undoing the harm of evil words. Here as in many of Monsieur Hervieu's plays the theme is summed up in a few of the closing words of the play:

MME. DE SABECOURT: Ah, words,—they flutter away.

LIGEUIL: Not so. Words remain.

THE DOCTOR: And they kill!

La Course du Flambeau, *The Passing of the Torch*, is a powerful study of the carrying on of life by the sacrifice of one generation to the next, a contrast of maternal and filial devotion. This, too, may be summed up in the tragic cry of Sabine: "For my daughter's sake I have killed my mother!" Of the six plays dealing with marital inconstancy two protest against the dominance of the man in marriage. *Les Tenailles* (*The Nippers*, or *The Chains*) depicts the man-

acles which bind the man and woman in an unhappy marriage from which the woman has vainly sought her freedom. The chains which have galled the woman finally weigh upon the man also:

We are riveted to the same ball and chain. Prepare now to feel their weight. I have dragged it long enough alone. We are two unfortunates. In misery there are only equals.

In *Le Réveil, The Awakening*, we have marital adjustment, and the grand passion proves to be only a sentimental illusion. *Le Dédale, The Labyrinth*, by many pronounced the greatest of Monsieur Hervieu's plays, deals with the impossibility of divorce where there is a child. The child is an eternal bond between the man and the woman. James G. Huneker pronounces *Le Dédale* the most significant French play of the new century thus far (1905).

It must be recalled that the Divorce Bill of France made the attitude of certain early plays immediately old-fashioned. But divorce is a difficult process in France, and the unwillingness of one party to the marriage to grant freedom to the other may result in such conditions as result in *Les Tenailles*.

Connais-toi, or Know Thyself, is recommended for critical study.

STUDY OF *Connais-toi* (Know Thyself)

The theme is the failure of a man to apply his romantic ideas of honor to himself. The sequel reveals that he has one code for the world and another for himself when a crisis reveals to him the depths of his own nature. Here, again, the theme may be summed up in a few words of the closing dialogue:

GENERAL SIBERIAN: Yesterday I would have deemed my friend abject and grotesque.

CLARISSE: And were you a better man yesterday?

GENERAL SIBERIAN: I knew myself less well.

CLARISSE: Ah, who knows himself?

Note that all the characters are given painful self-revelations as well as General Siberian.

With reference to structure, observe the unity of the play; all the action takes place within a single day and in a single setting. Does this strain our sense of probability? Would Clarisse be so quickly overcome by the wooing of Pavail? Study the dialogue. Do you find instances in this play of that extravagance and unnaturalness with which Hervieu has been charged? Select instances of his frugality and restraint.

Is the dramatist interested primarily in the characters or in his basic idea? Contrast Clarisse and Anna. Just how are we given the impression that one was a serious-minded woman of great strength of purpose and the other a thoughtless, frivolous, pleasure-loving creature? How much do General Siberian's remarks contribute to our opinions? Given Clarisse, as the dramatist has pictured her, does he sin against her in her swift corruption by the impetuous love-making of Pavail? Is it not extremely improbable that two respectable matrons of quite differing mentalities would thus surrender to two youthful lovers between dawn and midnight? Compare the obstinacy of General Siberian before the crisis of his marital affairs with his humility later. Is it convincing?

The play was produced in Paris in 1909 and in New York in 1910. This is the author's choice of his plays.

Apply the following critique of Huneker to your study of this play:

"An anxious sincerity is the key-note of M. Hervieu's character. He abhors the facile triumphs of the Parisian play-maker who dallies with ignoble themes. A finely attuned intellect, a plentiful sympathy with suffering, a special sensitiveness to the soul feminine, combined with real artistry—though he despises mere technical dexterity—all have made Paul Hervieu the present master-psychologist of the French stage."

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Does the title refer especially to Siberian or to all involved?

Are the characters convincing and the action inevitable?

Discuss Clarisse's assumption that from the moment a woman's defenses are lowered a battle is on and the ending inevitable.

Does Pavail show ordinary common sense in urging his suit in a time and place where we know he will be detected?

Is the character of Clarisse consistent throughout?

Compare General Siberian with Torvald of *A Doll's House*.

Compare Clarisse with Nora Helmer and with Candida.

Analyze the speech of Clarisse beginning, "You would become more insistent, I weaker."

What is the significance of her plea, "Do not take from me the freedom to will"?

Is General Siberian's change of heart convincing?

Does Monsieur Hervieu teach resignation to the facts of an imperfect world?

Is the protagonist both for and against divorce?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

Connais-toi, Know Thyself, Chief Contemporary Dramatists, Vol. I (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

The Passing of the Torch, The Drama League Series (Doubleday, Page & Co.).

The Labyrinth (B. W. Huebsch).

In Chains (Poet-Lore, 1909), *The Nippers*.

Other Playwrights of the Modern French Stage

Professor Brander Matthews comments upon the fact that a new movement in any art is always led by a few men of genius. There are perhaps a dozen surrounding two or three

outstanding figures. "The dozen or so constitute the chorus, the others are the leaders. They sing the same piece and at times the chorus is equal to the solo; but only at times." We have found this to be true of preceding episodes of dramatic history; it is true of French realism.

Georges de Porto-Riche and Maurice Donnay are specialists in the theme of love. Monsieur Porto-Riche is called the psychologist of love; and as psychology often deals with morbid rather than healthy conditions, his plays have to do with the maladies of love. Can true unwavering affection become a nuisance, sapping the will and paralyzing freedom of action? Find the answer in *L'Amoreuse*, *The Loving Wife*. The ending, in reconciliation, although it could scarcely be called happy, takes this strife of the sexes out of the class of such bitter plays as those of Strindberg on the same theme. This particular play is a model of craftsmanship and was given production with Madame Réjane in the rôle of Germaine. It still holds the stage.

François de Curel has also been called a psychologist. Mysterious are the scenes and morbid are the people appearing in his plays. There is a suggestion of Poe in the fatalism of his tragic themes. Life as it is, is reflected in the plays of Henri Lavedan, and he excels in the creation of character. In *The Pardon* of Jules Lemaître the student may find the best of his work. As an example of the emotional plays of Henri Bernstein, bordering on melodrama, *The Thief* may be cited; and the two plays of Sacha Guitry, an actor and the son of a greater actor, written for his father, Lucien Guitry—*Pasteur* and *Deburau*—will amply repay the reader. The latter is a "tragicomedy of disillusionment" of the days of the courtesan, Marie Duplessis, La Dame aux Camellias. Alexander Woolcott says of it in *Shouts and Murmurs*: "A lonely and beautiful play which is an expression of the philosophy of the stage, the credo of the actor, the sad-faced comedian's *apologia pro vita sua*. In spirited and occasionally magical *vers libre*, he poured forth this piece which in the list of those rare plays written not only by the theater and

for the theater, but of the theater, is without a peer in the dramatic literature of his country and ours.”

LIST OF PLAYS AND REFERENCES FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING

The Loving Wife, Georges de Porto-Riche, *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. II.

The Fossils, François de Curel, *Four Plays of the Free Theater*. (D. Appleton and Co.)

Lovers, Maurice Donnay (Little, Brown & Co.).

The Pardon, Jules Lemaître, *Three Plays from the French* (Henry Holt & Co.).

The Prince d'Aurec, Henri Lavedan, *Three Plays from the French* (Henry Holt & Co.).

The Thief, Henri Bernstein (Samuel French).

Pasteur, Sacha Guitry, *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. II, translated by Granville Barker.

Deburau, Sacha Guitry, translated by Granville Barker. (G. P. Putnam's Sons)

See *Shouts and Murmurs*, Alexander Woolcott (Century Co.).

FRENCH ROMANTICISM: MAETERLINCK AND ROSTAND

One of Montaigne's favorite thoughts is that we can have no certain knowledge, since nothing is unchangeable, neither things nor minds, and that the spirit and its object are involved with each other in a perpetual maze. Changeful ourselves, we contemplate a world in change. Since this is so and since, moreover, all is vanity, let us love the books which delight us without worrying about classifications and doctrines and make a tacit compact with our own minds that our impression of to-day is no pledge of what to-morrow's will be.

—*Les Contemporains*, Jules Lemaître

Maurice Maeterlinck: Mystic and Symbolist

The pendulum of opinion is forever swinging from one extreme to the other; the realism of France, which sought to interpret life through itself, and the naturalism of Zola and

his disciples, which would present life without interpretation in all its sordidness and materialism, quite naturally aroused a movement of revolt, led by the symbolic poets and the romantic novelists of France. With the drama of Maeterlinck, Romance came in a new guise.

Monsieur Maeterlinck is a Belgian by birth but has made his home in France for many years and writes in the French language; it is therefore usual to consider him as a part of the French movement. He is poet, mystic, philosopher, essayist, and dramatist. His first plays were not taken seriously. *The Princess Maleine* is a medley of blood, lust, and terror, combining the horror of the English "tragedy of blood" with the gloom and fatalism of Edgar Allan Poe. As a youth, Monsieur Maeterlinck fed upon the classic drama of England, and it may be the traces of certain English tragedies in his work which won for him the title of the Belgian Shakespeare. He has always studied and revered the great English dramatist.

The next three plays, *The Intruder*, *The Blind*, and *The Seven Princesses*, added little to his popularity, although the first two of these are among the three which modern criticism ranks among the world's enduring dramatic literature. The third so ranked is *The Interior*, written two years later, *Pelléas and Mélisande* having appeared in the interval. It was only after the publication of his essays that the dramatic world began to realize that the plays of Monsieur Maeterlinck might contain a message all their own and were something more than amateur experiment. He appeared as a philosopher who had turned to the mystics for wisdom; a dramatist who could quote Jacob Boehme as readily as he could Shakespeare was at least a novelty. Once convinced that there was something in his work, the overzealous insisted upon reading into them much that was not there, especially in such plays as *The Seven Princesses* with its unexplained symbolism.

The public was not so much to blame for its early indifference. There were difficulties in the way of understand-

ing. The work was so different from anything which had been designed for the theater before: there was little action, no distinct conflict, but rather a group of helpless and agitated people driven to and fro by fate. And the dialogue, with its vague meaningless phrases and its monotonous reiteration, was like nothing the stage had ever heard. Quite naturally, these apparently amateur failures aroused both ire and ridicule. Monsieur Maeterlinck afterward explained that in his plays the only words of value are the meaningless ones; but that is a point his audiences would never have found out for themselves. The statement that even more valuable in expressing the soul than speech is silence further explains the dramatist; and those tremulous pauses in his dialogue, like the rests in a bar of music, become more intelligible. He saw these first "dream-dramas" as music, Huneker tells us; "he created something that is not quite painting, not quite drama, something that is more than poetry, less than music, full of ecstasies, silent joys, luminous pauses, and the burning fever of the soul that sometimes slays." His works have something akin to music, to painting, and to poetry because in their essence all these arts are one; they are but the expression through these various mediums of the rhythm that lies at the heart of life.

The Mysticism of Monsieur Maeterlinck

The mystic is one who apprehends divine truth directly, intuitively; those who have related the experiences of mysticism agree that there are fleeting glimpses of a transcendent beauty and wonder which they are utterly unable to put into words. Is not this inarticulate wonder in the dramas of the Belgian poet that which constitutes the indefinable essence of his work? To say that he is a romanticist is not enough; Rostand is a romanticist, yet he lacks the esoteric quality of Maeterlinck entirely. Romantic drama is drama over which the poetic imagination has played; some of the more mystical of the plays of Maeterlinck are broken rhythms of life over

which the light of the spirit plays. To sum it up in a single sentence, the truth of his plays will not be found in their direct action, but in the delicate suggestion, the vague premonition, the intangible emotion, that is born of the reaction of a human soul to the soul of the universe. The attempt to express such spiritual reaction through material things and physical forms is a difficult and daring one. Such drama must remain remote and shadowy in outline.

Later and More Practical Work

This dramatist, who specialized in dreamy moonlight motifs and super-natural settings, was to prove his ability to present a play with stirring theme and progressive action. *Monna Vanna* was presented successfully upon the Continent but forbidden in London. It was written for Madame Maeterlinck (Georgette Leblanc), as was the later *Joyzelle*. *The Blue Bird*, one of the most successful productions of recent years, won its first praise in the United States and in Russia. It is easily understood with its cheerful optimism and its series of little allegories. Its success is probably due in large part to its spectacular possibilities. The theme, that of the search of mankind for happiness, which is found after long journeys at its own fireside, is not new; but the treatment is original and satisfying. When *The Betrothal* was published, Maeterlinck remarked that it was the second in a series of three, of which the last was to be the most momentous. The promised sequel in this trilogy of human adventure has not appeared.

In the interval between *The Blue Bird* and *The Betrothal* came *Mary Magdalene*, a study of the transformation of a woman's soul under the influence of the Christ. *Sister Beatrice* and *Ariane* and *Barbe Bleue* are librettos for which music has been written. Bluebeard's sixth wife is a clever study in feminism. In the list of selected plays which follow, those have been indicated which illustrate the develop-

ment and full powers of the dramatist; one may not know his work without familiarity with them all. The essays should be read as a guide to the philosophy embodied in the plays. For the purpose of illustration, the early group, which Ludwig Lewisohn declares will remain though all else of Maeterlinck's work be forgotten, *Monna Vanna* as a type of the technical success, and *Pelléas and Mélisande*, typical of the sad unreality of his earlier plays, are suggested. The following one-act plays will amply repay careful study:

The Intruder (1891). Produced in New York by the Academy of Dramatic Art in 1893. A study of approaching Death, the Intruder. In the room adjoining that where a woman lies dying, an old grandfather, blind but clairvoyant, senses the approach of a stranger and his entrance to the chamber. Everything suggests the coming of the dread visitant.

The Blind. Produced under the same auspices. A priest leads a multitude of blind old men and women into an ancient forest under a sky of deep stars. And there he dies. The fears of the sightless ones huddled there without a leader, with only animal instinct and the eyes of an infant to guide, are terrible and mysterious. Each must interpret the riddle of the ancient forest for himself; critics have argued endlessly about it all. The symbolism of darkened souls huddled in the isle of Time, surrounded by the ocean of Eternity, with a dead religion helpless to point the way, is quite obvious.

The Interior. A family, all unconscious of the approach of a dread visitor, the Intruder again, is seen through a window gathered about a table. Outside the lighted window an old man converses quietly with a stranger:

They think themselves in safety, they have shut the doors and the windows have iron bars. . . . They do not suspect that I hold here, two steps from the door, all their little happiness, like a sick bird, in my old hands which I do not dare to open.

The Interior was produced by the American Academy of Dramatic Art in 1894.

Monna Vanna. Should a woman imperil her honor to save others? This is not a new theme, but it is given a new and picturesque setting in the city of Pisa in the fifteenth century. Pisa may be saved if the high-born lady will go alone, clad only in mantle and sandals, to the tent of the conqueror. Compare the story of Judith and Holofernes. The husband adds to his horror the injustice of accusation of a former alliance when Vanna decides to accept the terms. He refuses to believe that Monna Vanna and Prinzivalle are innocent because he is himself incapable of the nobility of conduct which they display. Note how his evil thought proves to be the bond which eventually draws the suspected ones together. Compare Monna Vanna in her superb courage with the infantile heroines of Maeterlinck's earlier plays.

This play was produced in Paris and Munich, and also in New York. It was given in Paris in 1910 as an opera with music by Fevrier.

STUDY OF *Pelléas and Mélisande*

The theme is a variation of the familiar story of Paolo and Francesca, namely the power of a great love to overcome circumstance and all effort of will. Love is triumphant over death in spite of fate. Compare the innocent childlike affection of Pelléas and Mélisande with the passion of D'Annunzio's lovers. Compare with the Paolo and Francesca of Stephen Phillips. Note the effect of fog, forest, sea, and ruined castle in creating an atmosphere of unreality, and the fatalism which binds the whole together. It is fate which brings Mélisande to the gloomy castle, and it is fate which leaves the little waxen daughter there to play her part in turn. The old king remarks, "I have never put myself athwart a destiny . . . there happen perhaps no useless events."

The structure of the plot loiters through many short scenes,

mere episodes, rather than progresses, and yet it is moving to an event very surely. Note the use of premonition, as in the scene where the lambs are driven to slaughter, and the loss of the wedding-ring, and in the first scene where the great steps of the castle cannot be washed clean. What is the symbolism of the noxious pool in the vault and the lizards that are eating away the foundations? Mélisande dies, not from her wound, but from the intent to kill. Ideas can slay. As an example of dramatic suspense study the scene in Act Five where the frightened servants with uncanny sentience await the approaching death:

When the time is come we shall go up of ourselves—

We ought to make the children keep still, they are playing before the ventilator.

They will keep still of themselves by and by.

The time has not yet come.

[After an interval of aimless conversation.]

I no longer hear the children screaming.

They are sitting down before the ventilator—they are huddling against each other.

I no longer hear anything in the house.

Come, it is time to go up.

[The women servants silently enter the chamber.]

GOLAUD: What are all these women coming here for? Who was it called them?

PHYSICIAN: It was not I . . .

[The servants do not move nor answer.]

ARKEL: Hush! . . . Hush! . . . We must speak softly now—the human soul is very silent . . . the human soul likes to depart alone. . . . It suffers so timorously . . .

[The servants suddenly fall on their knees.]

PHYSICIAN: *[Approaching the body and feeling the body.]* They are right. . . .

In characterization, unreal types of romance rather than creatures of flesh and blood are here depicted. Mélisande is a fragile symbol of joy and beauty caught in the web of dire circumstance. Compare with Undine. Her affection and innocence are comparable to Juliet. Contrast the tower scene with the balcony scene. (Pelléas and Mélisande rise to

reality in this scene and in the climax of their discovery by Golaud.) The old King Arkël is the gentle philosopher whom Maeterlinck employs as *raisonneur* in many of his plays, the author's mouthpiece.

The play was first given with Forbes-Robertson and Mrs. Patrick Campbell in the title rôles. It has been produced in London and New York and as a lyric drama with music by Claude Debussy.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

What elements contribute to the unreality of the atmosphere?

What American poet is suggested here as in many other continental plays?

Has the first scene any especial significance? Could it be as well omitted?

What is the significance of the lost wedding-ring and Golaud's accident?

Do the three sleeping beggars add to the unfoldment of the plot or are they merely the "embroidery of incident"?

What is the significance of the visit to the vault with its suspense and surprise?

What do the stagnant pool and the encroaching lizard signify?

What is the dramatic import of the bleating lambs?

What familiar dramatic type is represented in the old King Arkël?

Do you find a suggestion of Shakespeare anywhere in the play?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS FOR READING

(Published by Dodd, Mead and Co., New York).

The Intruder (1891).

The Blind (1891).

The Interior (1895).

Pelléas and Mélisande (1893), *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Ariane and Barbe Bleue (1901).

Monna Vanna (1902).

The Blue Bird (1908).

The Betrothal (1918).

Mary Magdalene (1910).

Rostand: Poet of the Neo-Romantic Movement

When Monsieur Edmond Rostand was made a member of the French Academy it was a national acknowledgment that he was not only a great dramatist but a creator of enduring literature, that his plays will stand the test of time and reading as well as representation. Rostand is frankly romantic; his plays are an escape from reality; yet they are molded by the naturalistic thought of his day. He is not a symbolist, except as all poetic imagination is subject to symbolic flights; he is not mystical.

Strangely enough, the first play of this romanticist was a laugh at his own art. *Les Romanesques*, published in 1894, is a satire upon the follies of romantic dreamers. It is not so much romance as the world's false idea of romance which is satirized. His setting for the play, he whimsically remarks, may be anywhere you please so long as the costumes are pretty. *Les Romanesques* was produced in New York by the American Academy of Dramatic Arts under the name *The Fantastics*.

The next year came *La Princess Lointaine, The Far-Away Princess*. The quest of the romantic lover for a princess he had never seen symbolizes the quest of the ideal. The theme is embodied in a poem by Browning. The part of the princess was taken by Madame Sarah Bernhardt, but the production was not very successful.

La Samaritaine, the story of the woman of Samaria and the Saviour, was given in Paris in 1897 with Madame Bern-

hardt as Photine. It is not important dramatically, not nearly as effective as Maeterlinck's handling of a New Testament story in *Mary Magdalene*.

With the production of *Cyrano de Bergerac* in the same year, Rostand found himself famous. It was a triumph for the new romantic movement as well as for the dramatist and showed that the swinging pendulum had rebounded from naturalism to the extreme height of the opposite vibration.

The dramatic world now had its eye upon Rostand and awaited with eagerness his next adventure. In 1900, this watchful expectancy was rewarded with *L'Aiglon*, the tragedy of the hapless son of Napoleon; that eaglet in an Austrian cage, alternately swayed by the ambition of his Corsican heritage and depressed by the abnormal physical and mental inheritance from his decadent Austrian lineage. The part of the Duke of Reichstadt has been interpreted by Madame Bernhardt and by Miss Adams. The treatment inclines toward melodrama, and the long arm of coincidence is employed rather continuously; but the pathos of the weak little hero goes to the heart. The Duke of Reichstadt is an idealist, dreaming of reconquering an empire while he is a prisoner to unalterable circumstance. The theme is naturalistic and the treatment romantic. The scenes depicting the shattered mirror into which Fate, in the person of the relentless Metternich, has compelled the young duke to look and the spectral legions on the field of Wagram are especially impressive. Fate speaks the final word; "Clothe him in his Austrian uniform," orders Metternich.

The world was hearing much of Rostand during the next decade but nothing from him. From his retirement came rumors of a fantastic creation in which the birds and beasts walked and talked. Impossible! declared the critics. After ten years of silence *Chantecler* appeared. It was produced successfully in spite of difficulties. In New York Miss Maude Adams appeared in the title rôle. The theme is again a disappointed and disillusioned idealist, but, this

time, an unconquered one. Chantecler is convinced that his song does not cause the sun to rise, but he does not cease to sing. He is instructed by the nightingale:

Learn, comrade, this sorrowful and reassuring fact, that no one, cock of the morning or evening nightingale, has quite the song of his dreams.

In this play the dramatist has become an interpreter of life. Each of the fowls and animals represents a type or phase of human society; the symbolism is usually quite obvious. It is the eternal triangle of art, love, and life, in a new aspect. The hero, Chantecler, betrayed by his love and disillusioned, turns to practical helpfulness.

Faith that so nobly in the soul has lain
Still seeks its habitation, even slain.

I'll ne'er forget that noble forest green,
Wherein I learned that he whose dream has died
Must perish, or arise in nobler pride.

The translations have lost the poetry. The lines quoted above are from some brief passages in *The Modern Drama* by Ludwig Lewisohn.

The reading of *L'Aiglon* and *Chantecler* is recommended, and also a critical study of *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

STUDY OF *Cyrano de Bergerac*

The theme is the failure of a noble and poetic nature to achieve because of the paralyzing force of circumstance—in Cyrano's case, the physical handicap of grotesque appearance—the unconquerable soul that cannot be defeated. The universal appeal of this play is the fact that each one recognizes in the hero his own latent greatness struggling for expression. Except for this or that, we all should have been heroic, and so the conflict of Cyrano becomes our own. Humor, pathos, and sentiment are mingled in a romantic and im-

probable story. The first scene and its stage-directions contain an admirable reconstruction of the theater of the seventeenth century, the theater of Molière.

The structure is that of a heroic comedy ending with death. Note in the opening act how carefully the way is prepared for the appearance of Cyrano. The unity of time and place is disregarded utterly in the setting of the five acts in different localities and the fifteen years' interval between Acts Four and Five. Note the dramatic irony of the manner of Cyrano's death.

I would wish to die on a fine evening, under a rose-flushed sky, delivering myself of a good *mot* in a good cause! . . . Pierced with a noble weapon, by an adversary worthy of oneself, to fall upon a glorious field, the point of a sword through my heart, the point of a jest on my lips!

He falls, indeed, with a jest on his lips, but a cowardly blow of a lackey gives him his death-wound.

Fate will have his laugh at us! Here am I killed, in a trap from behind, by a lackey with a log! In my whole life I have not had anything I wanted . . . not even a decent death!

As examples of the wit and imagination which give brilliancy to the dialogue, study carefully the tirade upon noses of Cyrano in the first act and the nonsense with which he holds de Guiche until the marriage is over. The characters are treated in a naturalistic way although the situations are improbable. It is to be regretted that many available translations have lost the poetic beauty of the lines.

All the characters, the three principals as well as the Gascony cadets and the poetical pastry-cook, are romantic. Cyrano is a blustering and melodramatic figure, reminding us of the heroes of Dumas, yet he is human and real enough to enlist our sincere sympathy. We know he is posing, yet it is such brave affectation that we can only echo his own words: "What a gesture!" That one act is symbolic of Cyrano's entire life. As he flings his entire resources in

a bag of gold upon the stage, so he spends his life in service, content to hear from afar the happy laughter bought with his sacrifice. Doomed to be a figure awakening derision, he adorns his inner man:

It is not a handsome figure, it is my soul, I hold erect as in a brace. I go decked with exploits instead of ribbons. I taper to a point my wit like a mustache.

Bound to be misunderstood, he makes light of displeasure:

For me every day Hatred starches and flutes the ruff whose stiffness holds the head well in place. Hatred is a bondage . . . but it is a halo, too!

Note how the best of the two men goes into the making of the composite lover:

You shall lend to me all-conquering physical charm . . . and between us we will compose a hero of romance! . . . I shall be wit to you . . . you to me shall be good looks!

Note that the character of Cyrano is revealed most fully in his dying words: he mocks at death and at himself; he swings his sword in his last great encounter:

I believe that she is looking at me . . . that she dares look at my nose, the bony baggage who has none! What are you saying? It is no use? I know it! But one does not fight because there is hope of winning! No! . . . No! . . . it is much finer to fight when it is no use!

You have wrested from me everything, laurel as well as rose . . . Spite of your worst, something will still be left of me to take whither I go . . . and to-night when I enter God's house, in saluting broadly will I sweep the azure threshold with what, despite of all, I carry forth unblemished and unbent . . . my plume!

The philosophy of Cyrano seems to be that, after all, life is in the struggle rather than the attainment:

It matters not . . . I fight! . . . I fight! . . . I fight!

This play has been produced on the stages of all Europe.

Coquelin first interpreted the rôle of Cyrano in 1897. Coquelin and Bernhardt played it in London, and Richard Mansfield gave it for two seasons in America. Margaret Anglin and Ada Rehan have appeared as Roxane. It was revived in New York the past season, with Walter Hampden in the title rôle.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

What is the real theme expressed in fewest words?

In what single sentence may the character of Cyrano be summed up?

What theory of life is expressed through Cyrano?

Is Roxane loving or merely wishing to be loved?

Select some instances of naturalistic treatment in the play.

How is the romantic spirit shown in character and incident?

Discuss the improbability of Roxane's visit to the battlefield.

Was Cyrano's braggadocio manner a true expression or a pose?

Is his silence for fifteen years probable? Is it essential dramatically?

What is the universal appeal of this play?

Is the death of Cyrano inevitable? Is this, then, a tragedy?

What do you consider the most dramatic moment of the play?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS (1897)

Cyrano de Bergerac, translated by Brian Hooker (Henry Holt & Co.) used by Walter Hampden.

In Chief Contemporary Dramatists, Vol. II (Houghton Mifflin Co.). Also in single volume (Doubleday, Page & Co.).

L'Aiglon (1900), translated by Louis N. Parker (Harper & Brothers).

Chantecler (1910) (E. C. Duffield & Co.).

REFERENCES FOR DETAILED STUDY OF MODERN FRENCH DRAMA

Dramatists of To-day, Edward Everett Hale, Jr. (Henry Holt & Co.) (containing Rostand and Maeterlinck).

Aspects of Modern Drama, Frank Wadleigh Chandler (Macmillan Co.) (for notes on plays).

The Modern Drama, Ludwig Lewisohn (B. W. Huebsch).

Iconoclasts, a Book of Dramatists, Huneker (Charles Scribner's Sons) (containing Becque, Hervieu, and Maeterlinck).

The Social Significance of the Drama, Emma Goldman (Gorham Press) (study of *Chantecler*, *Monna Vanna*, *Damaged Goods*, and *Maternity*).

Contemporary French Dramatists, Barrett H. Clark (D. Appleton & Co.) (containing Curel, Brieux, Porto-Riche, Hervieu, Donnay, Rostand, Bernstein, Lavedan, Lemaître).

The Contemporary Drama of France, Frank W. Chandler (Little, Brown & Co.).

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OF THE MODERN FRENCH MOVEMENT

Discuss the influence of the dramatic novelists and their naturalistic treatment.

In what respect did the work of Henri Becque differ sufficiently from former efforts to merit the term New School?

Discuss the term "comedy of humanity" with relation to the drama of Brieux.

Was Brieux more dramatist or reformer?

Describe the movement back of romanticism from the extreme realism of Brieux and Hervieu.

Discuss the mysticism of Maeterlinck.

Discuss the romanticism of Rostand.

Comment upon the recent revival of *Cyrano de Bergerac* by
Walter Hampden.

Which, in your opinion, is likely to be the more enduring,
the product of the realistic impulse of French drama or
the counter-impulse of romanticism?

Was the modern movement in France a mere flare in the
development of the art, or a steady impulse from which
we may expect greater things?

II. MODERN GERMAN DRAMA

GERMAN NATURALISM: HAUPTMANN, SUDERMANN,
SCHNITZLER

If thou wouldst fare into the infinite, follow the finite in all directions . . . If thou wouldst rejoice in the whole, learn to see the whole in the humblest details.

—Goethe

Gerhardt Hauptmann: Culmination of Naturalism in Germany

STRANGELY enough, it remained for the mystical and imaginative Germans to bring to fruitage the naturalistic growth which had flowered in the North, scattered its pollen across England, and drifted into the fiction of France. The dramatic soil of Germany was lying fallow. The brilliant growth of the eighteenth century, led by Goethe, Lessing, and Schiller, died with the winter of the nineteenth; romance was buried beneath the drifts of positivism and scientific thought. In this dormant soil the new naturalism rooted very quickly and fruited far beyond the expectations of its early cultivators.

Until the eighties the German stage had been content with the historical dramas of Wildenbruch and transplanted French plays. Then the efforts of Arno Holz and Johannes Schlaf to represent life by the authentic speech of men, not rearranged for dramatic purposes, prepared the way for the modern drama of Germany. Their creed was exemplified in their combined work, *Die Familie Selicke*, published in 1890. They discarded verse and all artificial contrivances, permitted no direct exposition nor narrative, no rearrangement of events for progression of action, no culmination of plot. Quite mechanically, under this creed,

the artistic opening and the dramatic finale are eliminated, life comes out of a shadowy past and drifts into eternity, and its tragedies consist in the burden of the accumulated sorrows rather than tragic crises. All this was foreshadowed, of course, in Ibsen and Strindberg, but not so definitely understood and formulated.

Hauptmann, the most sensitive and gifted dramatist of the modern movement in Germany, was fortunate, as Shakespeare was fortunate, in having forerunners who pioneered the way and a stage ready to produce experimental work. The contact with Arno Holz and his new creed of the theater was the impetus required to release the genius of the young writer.

Gerhardt Hauptmann (b. 1862), after a sojourn at several schools, where he was distinguished chiefly by a lack of enthusiasm, took up the study of art at the Royal College, and then became a student at the University of Jena. Following the fashion of an earlier century, he completed his studies by traveling through Spain and Italy and after the approved romantic fashion married the young lady who nursed him through typhoid fever. It was after his marriage and residence in Berlin that he came in touch with Arno Holz and his revolutionary ideas of the stage. Neither Hauptmann's experiments with sculpture nor his efforts at poetry had satisfied the restless spirit aflame with the sense of social injustice and deep compassion for the helpless misery of humanity. The dramatic art seemed to afford him the medium he desired, and his career was finally determined.

The Free Stage Society of Berlin had been organized in 1889. It purposed to give eight productions annually, and its first series had already included such names as Ibsen, Tolstoy, Zola, and Goncourt, when the young Hauptmann approached them with his first play, *Before Sunrise*. It stands to their everlasting credit that they introduced, thus early in his career, their own greatest modern dramatist, along with the established playwrights of foreign countries.

This disagreeable play, with its tragedy of hopeless environment, its study of degeneracy among the Silesian peasant-farmers, and its thesis against intemperance, naturalistically presented, aroused a storm of discussion. The play is shocking in its brutality, and the reader is left with the uncomfortable sense that the situation might have been, should have been, saved; that the tragic ending is not inevitable; that it is due, not so much to the environment, as to the failure of the hero, if there be a hero, to rise to the situation. The character of Loth is priggish; he adopts the tone of the discarded *raisonneur* at times, and he is allowed to voice the dramatist's own opinions occasionally, which was anathema to the new creed. Is not Hauptmann speaking in these lines?

The condition of my happiness would be the happiness of all; nothing could content me until I saw an end of sickness and poverty, servitude and spiritual meanness. I could take my place at the banquet table of life only as the last of its guests.

It is Hauptmann who writes under the sense of the "essential wrongness of the conditions of life" which Loth voices.

With the next two plays the student of the drama is not so particularly concerned. It is extremely confusing to take up the plays of Hauptmann in their chronological order, for he turns from naturalism to romance, from tragedy to comedy, and then to medieval legend and history. It is more satisfactory to survey his work according to theme and treatment, overlooking date of production.

The Weavers, written in 1892 and produced the next year at the Freie Bühne, sent the fame of Hauptmann round the world. It is interesting to note that Hauptmann's grandfather was a weaver in Silesia and witnessed such a strike. The collectivism of the social drama inaugurated by Björnson here finds its culmination. The mob is the hero, and hunger is the motive. Huneker says: "*The Weaver* is a parable—a symphony in five movements,

with one grim, leading motive—hunger. In every act you hear that ominous, that sickening word ‘hunger.’ In *The Weavers* there are depths where ghastliness begins. It is not a play, it is a chorale of woe, malediction, and want.” The dramatist, as Galsworthy did later, presented his picture and left the audience to draw its own conclusions. To those who were expecting something more in this line, *The Beaver Coat*, a comedy of thieves, must have been surprising.

The next naturalistic study of environment upon character, treated seriously, appeared six years after *The Weavers*. *Drayman Henschel* is a study of the slow disintegration of character under a sense of guilt—a simple mind led out of its depths by fatalism and supernatural terror. Drayman Henschel is helpless under the burden of accumulated circumstance.

Things comes as they comes. What c’n a body do?

First thing, a good bone-handled whip broke. After that I drove over my dog an’ he died. ’Twas the best little dog I had. Then one right after another, three of my horses died . . . An’ then last of all my wife died. I noticed it well enough in my own thoughts that fate was against me.

This is tragedy, not of sudden crisis, but of a soul suffering from the pressure of unalterable circumstance in the midst of commonplace surroundings.

We pass over another interval of four years, and then, in 1903, came *Rose Bernd*. Seven years later, *Rats*, the most terrible, in a way, of the naturalistic tragedies, with its play upon the primitive passions and its dull fatalism, appeared. This play contains a criticism and defense of the naturalistic movement. The outraged director, Hassenreuter, defends the established order:

You deny the whole art of elocution, the value of the voice in acting! You want to substitute the art of toneless squeaking! You deny the importance of action, the validity of poetic justice, of guilt and its necessary expiation. . . . You asserted the other day that, in

certain circumstances, a barber or a scrub-woman might as fittingly be a protagonist of a tragedy as Lady Macbeth or King Lear!

Spitta retorts:

Before art, as before the law, all men are equal, sir!

Herr Hauptmann proceeds to illustrate his point by writing a tragedy about the noisome life of a Berlin tenement.

You could never write down all the life that sweeps down these stairs with its soiled petticoats—the life that cringes and moans, sighs, sweats, cries out, curses, mutters, hammers, jeers, steals, drives its dark trades up and down these stairs; the sinister creatures that hide there, playing their zithers, grinding their accordions, leading their vicious lives.

The symbol of the rats is used in several different senses throughout the play. It refers to the new school in the following lines:

In the garden of German art these rats are gnawing at the tree of idealism.

And it refers to the disintegrating conditions of the old tenement:

Everythin's rotten here; everythin's worm-eaten! Everythin's undermined by varmints and rats and mice.

As a type of the naturalistic phase of Hauptmann's art the critical study of *Rose Bernd* is recommended.

STUDY OF *Rose Bernd*

The theme is the tragedy of suffering in a human soul, the consequences of one false step and the futility of all attempt at readjustment. Professor Lewisohn speaks of this play as "helpless purity hunted to death by the hounds of righteousness." Do you think this is a fair statement of the case? Conventional righteousness does array itself

against the woman and make inevitable the tragic end, but was Rose in the beginning a careless and rather willing sinner?

Note that Hauptmann, like Ibsen, dispenses in structure with the use of scenes, making his entrances and exits as natural as possible. Note the creation of atmosphere in the stage-directions, where the landscape, hour, and weather all contribute to the sense of irresponsible joy in the beginning. The element of the supernatural brought in by Streckmann's reference to the cross unconsciously preys upon the mind of the hapless Rose. The heat of the summer, so often commented upon and the harvesters form the appropriate setting of this play of primitive passions.

Rose is surrounded by the types of character that make such tragedies as hers possible. Flamm, sensual and selfish, glad to get himself out of the responsibility; her father too absorbed in his godliness to notice her pitiable condition; her affianced too weak to be a staff for her; and Streckmann, the vile, insinuating incarnation of evil, goading her to destruction. The wife of Flamm is the only decent, clear-thinking person in the group, and she is handicapped in her effort to save Rose and the child. Rose herself is quite passive throughout. Passively she has drifted into this state; passively she takes the consequences. She speaks very little; we have little information of her thoughts about the whole matter.

I know what I want—and—maybe—I'll be able to put it through. An'—if not—it don't matter neither!

I will fight it all through! Only—nobody can't help me do it!

There is no more poignant scene in all dramatic literature than the homecoming and confession of Rose. She has fought it through, and she has been beaten.

A body is left too lonely in this world . . . too deserted! If only a body wasn't so lonely here . . . so lonely on this earth!

We might say, if we were permitted a *raisonneur* in nat-

uralism, that Frau Flamm fills that place. She is certainly voicing the thesis of the play when she says:

From the emperor an' the archbishop down to the stable boy—they've all gotten their bit of life in the same way, but there's no mention to be made of that! 'Tis the one thing they can't besmirch enough. An' if the stork but flies past the chimney-top—the confusion of people is great. They run in every direction.

The production of *Rose Bernd* was forbidden in Austria. It was produced in Germany with Elsie Lehmann in the title rôle. It was put on with Ethel Barrymore as Rose in New York in 1923.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Is the play one of action or passive suffering?

Are the characters natural and consistent?

Is Rose at any moment mistress of her fate after the first error?

We pity this individual case, but has the attitude of the world changed materially toward the erring woman?

Compare Rose with Hetty Sorrel, with Tess of the D'Urbervilles, with Gretchen.

Does this play consistently follow the creed of the naturalists?

Is the dialogue rearranged or "caught unawares?"

Does the theme go beyond life and suggest fundamental and eternal things?

The Romantic Phase of Hauptmann's Art

With the comedies of Hauptmann, and the historical play, and with those serious dramas which become minor in comparison with his own masterpieces, the average reader is not so much concerned; but there is another phase of his art of which he is the greatest national exponent, the new romanticism.

The three plays in which he combined naturalism with

interpretation and poetic imagination are *Hannele*, *The Sunken Bell*, and *Henry of Aue*.

This versatile writer began as an ultra-idealist; he turned to naturalism and created its greatest achievement; he turned to comedy with indifferent success; he turned to legend and history. But in all these adventures he remains artist and poet; while handling the stuff of life, he transcends life and lays hold upon the universal and eternal.

Hannele is a study of the psychology of a dying child; it deals with emotions rather than actions. Nothing could be more uncompromisingly real than the workhouse where the outcast child lies dying, and yet the dreams of this dying waif are wings upon which the soul is borne into purer realms. The dramatist has demonstrated here the truth of his own dictum: "The world's woe is the root of our heavenward yearning." *Hannele* should be compared with the dream-dramas of Galsworthy and Strindberg. It has been produced in America, with Mrs. Fiske in the title rôle.

Henry of Aue is an austere and spiritual drama founded upon a medieval tale. It is an attempt to relate an old legend in terms of the modern life—a modern miracle-play. It has many beautiful passages but is not so well known as *Hannele* or *The Sunken Bell*. It contains the significant lines:

And they who strive are they who live, albeit
Erring. Tireless to strive is still to be
Upon a goodly road.

As a type of the poetic and romantic play of the modern movement in Germany, *The Sunken Bell* is suggested.

STUDY OF *The Sunken Bell*

The theme is the conflict between art and life, between ambition and the obligations of personal life. It is the cry of Ibsen for the liberation of the individual, the struggle of Nietzsche's Superman. Compare *Brand*.

What's germed within me's worthy of the blessing—
Worthy the ripening.

This is an allegory of human life. The symbolism should not be pressed too far.

As poetry this play is supremely satisfying, and as drama it has proved one of the author's greatest successes. The influence of Nietzsche may be plainly traced in the third act, where the Master ruthlessly uses the weaker ones to further his purpose and bend all to his ambition. Note the dramatic motive of the supernatural in Act Four. Here, as in many of Hauptmann's plays, a character endures untold suffering with fortitude but succumbs to fatalism. Note the avoidance of the curtain during the acts.

Swept onward by the vision of his possible achievement in his beloved work, Heinrich, the bell-founder, stifles in the valley and wanders to the lonely heights.

The service of the valleys
Charms me no longer, and no more the peace
Calms my wild blood. Since on the peak I stood,
All that I am has longed to rise, and rise,
Cleaving the mists, until it touched the skies.

Heinrich is not an indifferent husband and father. He would spare his wife suffering if he could, but "his wine to them would be but gall and bitter venom." Unlike the selfish Rubek of *When We Dead Awaken*, he does not become indifferent to their pain. He has faith in his work and believes its accomplishment worthy of any sacrifice. Good artists are proverbially bad husbands. Listen to the extenuation of Etienne in *The Loving Wife* by Porto-Riche:

I grant that they [the artists and poets] have been bad husbands, lukewarm friends, and disobedient sons. What difference does that make? Their labors and their dreams have sown the seeds of happiness, of justice, and of beauty in the world. These egoists did not love, but they created love for succeeding ages.

This particular egoist, under the inspiration of Rautendelein,

child of nature, will build a new temple with a chime which shall call all the world to the heights, with a "a song long lost and long forgotten." Into the building goes the labor of the unwilling mountain-folk, while the tears of his deserted wife are filling the heavy urn. Heinrich fails as all must fail who renounce moral obligations to seek spiritual heights.

What in conception seemed all ecstasy,
Now turns to sorrow.

He is defeated, not by circumstance, but by his own remorse, which is symbolized by the tolling of the buried bell. Even in defeat he asserts his dominion:

Yet I was still the Master!
Ere it shattered me who molded it;
With this same hand, that gave it form and life,
I should have crushed and ground it into atoms.

With his dying breath he proclaims his heritage of freedom:

Who am I, God? But Heaven itself is mute.
Yet this I do know: that whatsoe'er I be,
Hero or weakling, demigod or beast—
I am the outcast child of the bright Sun
That longs for home . . .
I hear them! 'Tis the Sun-bells' song!
The Sun . . . the Sun . . . draws near!
The Night . . . is long!

Rautendelein is the embodied spirit of nature, joyous and irresponsible, creature of moods.

I'm spiteful when I'm vexed, and scratch and bite:
For good and bad in me's all mood and impulse.

He is an elemental spirit akin to Undine and to Ariel.

Where do I come from? . . . Whither go?
Tell me—I long to know!
Did I grow as the birds of the woodland gay?
Am I a fay?

Through love Rautendelein becomes half-human and finds sorrow as well as joy in her tears:

Within that little globe lies all the pain
And all the joy the world can ever know.

No other poet except Shakespeare has created such thoroughly satisfying fairy creatures as Hauptmann. The interpretation of these nymphs and fauns should not be too curiously pressed.

Contrast the realistic valley-folk and the romantic mountain-people. The practical and sensible Magda, the good Vicar, the superstitious Barber, and the enlightened Schoolmaster are all types, and yet they are first of all themselves.

To one reader *The Sunken Bell* may mean one thing and quite another thing to the next, and who shall say whether either is right? But both readers, if their senses are alert to sheer beauty, will be enriched by the poetry regardless of conflicting opinions. It leaves one with the dim sense of something sought and unattained and the conviction that, after all, death is not the end of human endeavor.

I know—I know—what once I did not know:
That Life is Death, and only Death is Life.

This play is usually considered to have some autobiographical significance, in the sense that *The Master-Builder* and *When We Dead Awaken* were personal with Ibsen.

Frau Agnes Sorma created the rôle of Rautendelein, and Mr. E. A. Sothern gave a most satisfying interpretation of Heinrich in America in 1899.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

What is the real theme of this play?

What other modern plays embody the conflict between the artist's personal life and his ideals?

Are the characters treated realistically?

What two authors are suggested in the treatment of Heinrich?

Was Heinrich's temple Christian or pagan?

Compare with the austere ideal of Brand and his ice-church.

Compare Rautendelein with Undine, with Ariel.

What is the significance of Rautendelein's tear?

What finally defeated Heinrich's purpose?

Is the artist who climbs over moral obligations ever successful?

Does it add to your enjoyment to interpret the play as an allegory of humanity struggling toward the light?

Is the drama to be read primarily for its meaning or for its poetic beauty?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS ARRANGED ACCORDING TO THEME

Social Injustice

Before Sunrise (1889).

The Weavers (1892).

Drayman Henschel (1898).

Rose Bernd (1903).

The Rats (1911).

Comedies Naturalistically Treated

The Beaver Coat (1893).

The Conflagration (1901).

The Neo-Romantic Plays

Hannele (1893).

The Sunken Bell (1896).

Henry of Aue (1902).

The plays of Hauptmann have been sympathetically translated and interpreted by Professor Ludwig Lewisohn. They are published by B. W. Huebsch, New York. *The Sunken Bell* is in the *Drama League Series* published by Doubleday, Page & Co., and also in the anthology *Representative Continental Dramas* published by Little, Brown & Co.

Sudermann: The Drama of Compromise

Hermann Sudermann (b. 1857) occupies a position of compromise between the new and the old. He is identified with neither the radical nor the conservative movement and is consequently repudiated by the critics and adherents of both. He attempted to go in several directions at the same time, to combine realism and romanticism, and to retain the old forms with a new content. In America his name is usually associated with that of Hauptmann in the modern movement, but his countrymen do not accord him so much honor. They more frequently rate him as one who caters to the commercial theater and the popular taste than as an artist of the first rank. He kept to the well-made play when the young revolutionists were abandoning it for the naturalistic creed. Herr Sudermann does not, however, revert to the artificiality of Augier and Scribe; he has a brilliant technique, although he often makes use of the improbable incident and resorts to exposition. His plays are intellectual rather than emotional.

Sudermann began his career as a novelist, and he is as definitely associated with East Prussia as Hauptmann is with Silesia, or Ibsen with the bleak shores of Norway. His first play, *Die Ehre*, played in English as *Honor*, was one of the successes of the century, appearing in the same year that witnessed the beginning of Hauptmann's career with *Before Sunrise*. Conventional honor and the inharmony between the elder and younger generations are the motives. In this first play there is evidenced that confusion of moral values which characterizes much of Sudermann's work. *Honor* has often been produced in Germany and has been given in America by the Academy of Dramatic Art.

Four years later came *Magda*, the best known of the dramatist's works, probably because of the rôle it has afforded to many popular actresses; Bernhardt, Duse, Modjeska, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, and Mrs. Fiske have interpreted the inde-

pendent and wayward Magda. This story of a prodigal daughter who returned to her father's house not wearing rags and chewing husks, but in fine clothes and loaded with roses, is a variation upon the wayward woman theme which Wilde and Pinero loved to depict. She looks upon her motherhood outside of marriage as a precious experience and refuses to heal her hurt honor by marrying the man who seduced her years before. Pinero would have had her commit suicide in the last act, and Wilde would have had her marry for respectability. She does neither. She probably goes back to her career quite well satisfied with herself. The tragedy is visited upon the orthodox father, who dies of apoplexy. This is quite a departure from the ancient idea that guilt must be expiated and the soul purged by pity and terror in the final events.

The Fires of St. John appeared in 1900 and was produced in America in 1904 with Miss Nance O'Neill as Marikke.

The Joy of Life was given by Mrs. Patrick Campbell in New York in 1902. Herr Sudermann's fondness for wayward women is again evinced. Beata is a sinner against the marriage law, but she has no consciousness of sin; she rather rejoices that through her love she has risen above herself. It is rather a dangerous doctrine and savors of Nietzsche, that one may be exalted and completed through sin. But Beata is such a lovable sinner, so full of the joy of life, so helpful to others, finding so much to laugh at in this vale of tears, finding life still beautiful "even when it's nothing but pain and renunciation," that she carries the sympathy of the audience completely. She has "a boundless capacity for happiness" and refuses to be crushed by social laws. When discovery threatens to cost the life of the man she loves, she drinks the poisoned cup with a toast:

And as the only living soul among you, I drink to the joy of living!

Brave, joyous, pagan Beata! She belongs to the shadowy realm where good and evil blend, the super-land of Nietzsche.

The following passage from *The Joy of Life* may be supposed to contain the writer's own philosophy:

Our growth ceases when we gain our end. Attainment means being nailed fast—nailed to a cross, sometimes!

John the Baptist adds another to the gallery of imperfect and improper heroines in the character of Salome. The treatment of this theme aroused a furor in Berlin.

In *The Three Heron Feathers* Herr Sudermann takes a flight into the realm of poetry and romance. This is a dramatized fairy-tale, symbolizing the quest of the ideal and its final discovery in the actual.

Sudermann's characterization of women should be compared with that of Pinero, Wilde, and Shaw. Study and discussion of *The Vale of Content* or *Happiness in a Corner*, written in 1895, is recommended.

STUDY OF THE VALE OF CONTENT

The theme is a variation of the eternal triangle, a woman divided in her affections between two men. The ending is quite satisfying through the husband's patience and tact. He opens the door and bids her go if she will, and, her fear of discovery gone, she becomes strong enough to avert the threatened tragedy. The psychology of latent fear and the rapid disintegration of character when a guilty love is once acknowledged are admirably wrought out. Compare the weakness of Clarisse after she has listened to Pavail's suit in Hervieu's *Know Thyself*.

Note the economy of the setting. The whole action takes place in the yard and living-room of the schoolmaster's home and within two days. Observe that the past fifteen years are made quite clear in the conversation without a sense of undue artificial exposition. Although Sudermann is not an exponent of extreme naturalism, the quiet close of the play, resolving into the dull drab tones of life itself, is a good illus-

tration of the naturalistic creed; Wiedemann and Elizabeth determine to patch up what remains of their happiness and make the best of it.

WIEDEMANN: My youth I cannot bring back to you . . . But little by little yours, too, will pass away . . . The desires will become more still . . . The longings go to sleep . . . every one must resign one's self—even the happiest . . . And who knows but then there'll be once more some happiness in this old nook of ours.

Wiedemann, as a type of the slow and conscientious, unsuccessful man, is extremely well drawn. His unwavering love and good sense save the situation.

Elizabeth is a woman of fine instincts in a dangerous position. Note the psychology of suggestion in the play. Every one, even her husband, suggests to her that she is unhappy and out of place. The peace which she is finding in her good deeds is discounted by this continual harping upon her supposed unhappiness. Her only dissatisfaction with her humdrum life is the concealed longing for life.

Ah, what a world of experience I have craved for! And then there come the winter evenings when one stares at the lamp, and the summer nights when the linden blooms before the door . . . And one says to one's self: Off beyond somewhere lies the great world of life and happiness—but I sit here and knit stockings.

The only solution of it all is that she, too, will grow old and eventually resign herself to "happiness in a corner." So, "life itself humbles us."

Note the characterization of the blind child and her delightful fancies in regard to sounds. "I used to think," she says, "that the notes of music were little round angels sitting on a long fence beating their wings." Observe also her almost clairvoyant sentience in regard to the situation.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Why is this treatment of the eternal triangle new?

Explain the psychology of suggestion and of fear in the progress.

Discuss the ending and its relation to life.

Why are Herr Sudermann's plays called unmoral?

What influence is evident in this confusion of good and evil?

Discuss the weakness of a woman's defenses when she confesses to a guilty love.

Compare Elizabeth and Candida.

Is the maternal and protective instinct stronger than other passions in both?

Is it at all probable that a woman of Elizabeth's type would be attracted by a coarse and selfish philanderer like Roecknitz?

How would Pinero have ended this play?

Compare the somewhat colorless and repressed yearning of Elizabeth with Beata's love of life.

Does the author, contrary to his usual custom, wish to teach that after all happiness in a corner is better than fullness of life won at the sacrifice of moral obligations?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

Magda (1911), translated by C. E. A. Winslow (Samuel French).

Johannes, translated by Mary Harned (*Poet Lore*, 1899).

The Three Heron's Feathers (*Poet Lore*, 1900), translated by H. T. Porter.

The Fires of St. John, translated by Charlotte and H. T. Porter (*Poet Lore*, 1904); also in *Representative Continental Dramatists* (Little, Brown & Co.).

The Joy of Living, translated by Edith Wharton (Charles Scribner's Sons).

The Vale of Content, *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

THE VIENNESE DRAMATISTS: VON HOFMANNSTHAL,
BAHR, SCHNITZLER

Hermann Bahr

Hermann Bahr (b. 1863) has been an experimenter in many forms of creative work but is better known as a critic than dramatist. Through his efforts the work of von Hofmannsthal first received recognition. As an illustration of his work, *The Concert*, with its clever characterization and depiction of the maternal attitude of the woman toward a weak and erring husband, is one of the best comedies. This has been adapted and acted in America very successfully by Leo Dietrichstein.

Hugo von Hofmannsthal

Hugo von Hofmannsthal is another Viennese whose perfectly worded prose articles are as well known as his poetry. Born in 1874, he was not engaged in the literary revolution which established the naturalistic movement. He goes back to the Renaissance for his themes and embroiders them with richly colored verse. The one-act play *Death and the Fool* remains one of his greatest creations. The hero finds himself helpless and empty-handed in the presence of approaching Death; he has never meant aught to any one nor felt unselfish affection for a human creature. It is the loneliness once more of the esthetic soul that has refused human discipline and repudiated moral obligations. And so he passes "from out life's dreaming, unto death's awakening," while the grim warrior who has slain him muses:

How wonderful these humans are, indeed,
Who do explain the inexplicable,
And what was never writ, they read;
The intricate they, subjugating, bind,
And thru eternal darkness paths they find.

Von Hofmannsthal was the pioneer of the symbolist movement of modern Germany.

Arthur Schnitzler: The Drama of Disillusionment

In 1912 there appeared four volumes of plays and a number of short stories and poems by a Jewish physician of Vienna. Dr. Schnitzler won his first fame with the publication of the *Anatol* sketches, a series of dramatic dialogues setting forth the love-affairs of one Anatol, seven in all. These little plays are distinguished by brilliance and vivacity but scarcely give a hint of the more serious work to follow. There is little of the mature genius of the dramatist in the plays which followed in the next few years.

When the four short plays were published under the title *Living Hours*, critics predicted that a new note in the modern movement had been struck by the Viennese physician; and they were convinced of the truth of their prophecy when, in 1903, *The Lonely Way* (*Der Einsame Weg*) appeared. Dr. Schnitzler has not surpassed this latter play. In *Living Hours* we have again a study of the artistic temperament and its arraignment. The whole of the criticism and defense is summed up in the following closing lines:

HAUSDORFER: What is all your writing—even if you were the greatest genius—what is all your writing compared to one such living hour?

HEINRICH: *Living hours?* They live no longer than the life of him who remembers them. And it is no mean vocation to give such hours an enduring existence beyond the grave.

To read the dramas of Arthur Schnitzler with understanding one must realize the atmosphere in which he works. Although he writes in the language of the North, he has inherited the traditions of the joy-loving Latin races. Vienna is one of the oldest cities in Europe, and its roots are buried deeply in the civilization of the past. One must recall also that the dramatist is a physician, keenly interested in the scientific side of suggestion and the subconscious processes;

that he is a Jew, and a Jew in Vienna is in a position of quite unbelievable isolation. There is sometimes a clinical observation of mental and physical conditions, and an irony which is characteristic of the doctor who knows too much of the weaknesses of men. The family physician is a stock character with Schnitzler.

If *The Lonely Way* is the most universal in its appeal, *Intermezzo* is the subtlest and cleverest of the plays. It reveals in delightful dialogue the psychology of a man and a woman seeking to adjust their marriage relation to permit perfect freedom and yet retain their right to love. The man interprets liberty as license and returns, nauseated, expecting ready reinstatement. Cecilia can neither make a plunge herself nor receive so lightly her bedraggled husband—because she is a woman. The play is a new and convincing presentation of the double standard and the right of a woman to creative expression, showing the difficulties in the way of individual development in the conventional marriage.

To the naturalism of the modern treatment Dr. Schnitzler has added poetry and pathos. He does not offer a cure-all, a definite philosophy of life, but rather looks at all with tolerance and seeks to hold to such illusions as still remain in the general wreckage of human ideals. For a poetic estimation of his work read von Hofmannsthal's introduction to *Anatol* with its colorful pictures:

Soothing words and luring pictures;
Subtle stirrings, mere nuances,
Agonies, adventures, crises. . . .

Professor Lewisohn ranks Dr. Schnitzler next to Hauptmann in modern German drama.

STUDY OF THE LONELY WAY

The loneliness of those who have not troubled to bind something of human affection to themselves along their path is the motive of this play, if, indeed, it is possible to select a

single motive from one of Dr. Schnitzler's plays. He seldom develops a plot or uses a dominant theme. Perhaps these lines sum it up as well as any:

We have to tread the downward path alone—we, who have never belonged to anybody but ourselves. The process of aging must needs be a lonely one for our kind, and he is nothing but a fool who doesn't in time prepare himself against having to rely upon any human being.

A section of life passes us by, and in its passing shows how all things slip away—love, joy, even sorrow, become but memories:

Has not the word that just rings out turned to memory already? Is not the note that starts a melody reduced to memory before the song is ended?

The structure is that of a play of atmosphere rather than plot, of mood rather than conflict. Note the fondness of the author for old gardens and for the melancholy beauty of spring and autumn. Lilacs, faintly fragrant and purple, and drifting yellow leaves, alternately serve his mood. In this particular play it is the "finest time of the year"—

When the woods sparkle with red and yellow, and a golden mist lies on the hill, and the sky grows pale and remote as if it were scared by its own infinity.

Note the somewhat abnormal psychology of Johanna, her visions, and her belief in a former existence; the stress upon dreams and premonitions of impending death. Observe also the gradual withdrawing of a person with chronic illness from life, an instance, again, of a physician's observation.

In Julian, we have the selfish artistic type again. He follows the open road to his own desires, repudiating all obligations. He is a frankly selfish egoist. Sala is more subtle. He shuns human contacts to avoid consequent suffering, affecting a remoteness which is somewhat of a pose, as a matter of self-protection.

As I rule I have no friends. And if I have any I repudiate them.

The entire Wegrat family emphasizes that remoteness of human relationship:

They are hardly aware of their mutual relationships even, and seem fated to flit away from each other to God knows where.

Dr. Reumann is the author's voice pleading for tolerance.

It is useless to dissect such a play. It leaves the reader with the haunting sense of forgotten melody, the fragrance of warm earth after rain, and the sere leaves falling in garden-paths. More than that, it awakens a feeling of pity and tolerance and a sense of something sweet and poignant for a moment comprehended and then forgotten. It is a drama of disillusionment with its falling veils and loneliness and impending death, yet over it broods the sky "scared at its own infinity."

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

How many individualists are there in this play?

Distinguish between the egoism of Julian and that of Sala.

Was Johanna also an egoist? Is her suicide a forced note?

What other families in literature can you recall in which this lack of understanding and remoteness of relationship existed?

Is Johanna's remark true: "As long as you are not clinging to any one the world is wide and the sky infinite"?

What author said, "The man of genius cannot afford friends"?

Has the dramatist any philosophy of life to offer?

What is the office of Dr. Reumann in the play?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS FROM THE VIENNESE DRAMATISTS

Dr. Arthur Schnitzler

Living Hours (translated 1906), one act, *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. II.

The Lonely Way; Intermezzo; Countess Mizzi (translated 1915), in one volume with introduction by Edwin Björkman (Little, Brown & Co.).

The Lonely Way is included in *Representative Continental Dramas* (Little, Brown & Co.).

Hermann Bahr

The Concert (1909), *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. II.

Hugo von Hofmannsthal

Death and the Fool, Contemporary Dramatist Series (Richard G. Badger, Boston).

THE NEW SCHOOL OF GERMANY: EXPRESSIONISM

Wedekind, Hasenclever, Kokoscka, Werfel, Toller, the Capek Brothers, Molnar

Frank Wedekind, literary anarchist, is more akin to the later movement of Germany than to the earlier playwrights. His *Spring's Awakening* is the best known of his plays and is also the first. Ludwig Lewisohn says that no competent account of the modern drama can venture to omit this remarkable work; by it his fame and infamy were established. He abandoned the technique of the naturalists and presents his theme by means of a large number of unrelated scenes or episodes, thus foreshadowing the methods of the expressionists.

What is expressionism? It seems that nobody knows exactly. It is a name given rather indiscriminately to such different creations as Andreyev's *Life of Man* and Eugene O'Neill's *Hairy Ape*. The clearest statement of the German movement is found in *The Drama of Transition* by Isaac Goldberg, to which the writer is indebted for the opinions of the younger German playwrights as well as the following statement:

Expressionism is a child of many ancestors; one may not say for a certainty whether it will grow to adulthood; but, like the infant

fondly watched over by its doting parents, it reveals in its restless features now the traces of this relative, now of that. It belongs to them all.

It is easier to define expressionism by telling what it is not. It is opposed to naturalism and to romanticism. It is a revolt against the naturalism of the nineties and seeks to clarify emotions through discarding of conventions. It has achieved in the process a greater obscurity. It would emphasize the transcendence of spirit over the material. The movement began in Germany before the war and was first exemplified in painting. To get away from the photographic realism of modern art and drama, the new school turned to ancient Gothic and Egyptian symbolism. Dr. Goldberg uses a word which is most expressive to name this new creation; he calls it "neo-primitive." It is characterized in the drama by rapidly shifting scenes, telegraphic speech, and psychoanalysis. All this was of course foreshadowed in the psychoanalytic novels, in which the soul-adventures of the hero or heroine occupy four hundred pages of perfectly good paper, while the body has traversed the distance between house and office, perhaps. In this new sort of drama man is in conflict with his other self or selves rather than with environment or destiny. The characters with whom he contends may be but projections of his own personality. Such dramas require an utterly new method of acting and production. Color is used to symbolize certain emotions. Mr. Kenneth Macgowan, in *Continental Stagecraft*, describes these new productions, and Mr. Jones has supplemented his work with colored plates which illustrate the methods. The whole movement is in process of experimentation and has not yet crystallized into a formula. Mr. Macgowan comments upon the use of black backgrounds, suggesting spiritual darkness, across which plays the red of blood and the blue of sinister cruelty.

George Kaiser (b. 1878) is one of the earliest experimenters with the speed-technique. *From Morn to Midnight* is one of the best available examples of his work, and also of the mod-

ern movement, and should be carefully studied. He has written a score of plays.

Walter Hasenclever (b. 1890) and Oscar Kokoscka (b. 1886, Austria) are two extremists. Of Kokoscka, Dr. Goldberg remarks, "He is comprehensible only in tiny oases; and then the esthetic reward is almost nil." Hasenclever's *Der Sohn*, a study of the revolt of the younger generation, and *Die Mensche* are best known. The speed of his technique may be guessed by the remark of one of his characters: "What is eight hours old has already become historical to me." He resurrects the discarded *raisonneur* and causes severed heads to speak. Frank Werfel, another extreme experimenter, is best known by *Spiegelmensch*, *The Mirror-Man*.

The best two plays of Ernest Toller, a communist, who has been imprisoned for his political ideas, are available in translation. They are *Masse-Mensch* and *The Machine-Wreckers*. For continental production of *Masse-Mensch* see Kenneth Macgowan's *Continental Stagecraft*. See notices of the Theater Guild production in America in current comment on plays.

Two other plays introduced to America by the Theater Guild should be studied: *R. U. R.* by the Czechoslovakian, Karel Capek, and *Liliom* by Franz Molnar, Austrian playwright. Both of these plays outgrew the small theater and ran successfully for a long season. The Kapek brothers collaborated in the insect-fantasy, *The World We Live In*, which was seen on Broadway in 1923.

SELECTED PLAYS FROM GERMANY'S NEWER MOVEMENT

Spring's Awakening, Frank Wedekind.

The Heart of the Tenor, Frank Wedekind (*Smart Set*, 1919).

From Morn to Midnight, George Kaiser (Doubleday, Page & Co.), Theater Guild Production.

Masse-Mensch, Ernest Toller (Alfred A. Knopf), Theater Guild Production.

- The Machine-Wreckers*, Ernest Toller (Alfred A. Knopf).
R. U. R., Karel Capek (Czechoslovakian) (Doubleday, Page & Co.), Theater Guild Production.
Liliom, Franz Molnar (Austrian) (Doubleday, Page & Co.), Theater Guild Production.

GENERAL REFERENCES FOR MODERN DRAMA OF GERMANY

- Modern Drama*, Ludwig Lewisohn (B. W. Huebsch).
The Spirit of Modern German Literature, Lewisohn (B. W. Huebsch).
Studies in Modern German Literature, Otto Heller (Ginn & Co.).
Dramatists of To-day, Edward Everett Hale (Henry Holt & Co.).
The Continental Drama of To-day, Barret H. Clark (Henry Holt & Co.).

The New Movement

- Drama in Transition*, Isaac Goldberg (D. Appleton & Co.).
Continental Stagecraft, Kenneth Macgowan (Harcourt, Brace & Co.).

Magazine Articles

- Hauptmann, Realist and Idealist*, May Lamberton Becker, *Independent*, 73, 1913.
Hermann Sudermann, Paul H. Grumann, *Poet Lore*, 22, 1911.
Evolution of German Drama. Ernest von Wiedenbach, *Forum*, 25, 1898.
Three Contemporary German Dramatists, John F. Coar, *Atlantic Monthly*, 81, 1898.
The Dramas of Gerhardt Hauptmann, Paul H. Grumann, *Poet Lore*, 1910.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OF THE MODERN MOVEMENT IN GERMANY

Comment upon the preparation for naturalism in Germany through growth of scientific thought.

The forerunners of Hauptmann.

The Free Stage Society of Berlin.

The influence of Ibsen, Tolstoy, Zola, and Goncourt through production in Germany.

Discuss the dual character of Hauptmann's dramatic work.

The neo-romantic movement and its leaders in France and Germany.

What was the "drama of compromise?"

Discuss the symbolist movement and the work of von Hofmannsthal.

Other Viennese dramatists.

The growth of expressionism.

ACT THREE

RATHER A LONG ACT IN WHICH WE MAY EXPECT A CLIMAX

I

THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE

ENGLISH FOUNDATIONS: JONES, PINERO, AND WILDE

As a man lives and thinks, so will he write. But it is certain, that to the making of good drama, as to the practice of every other art, there must be brought an almost passionate love of discipline, a white heat of self-respect, a desire to make the truest, fairest, best thing in one's power; and that to these must be added an eye that does not flinch. Such qualities alone will bring to a drama the selfless character which soaks it with inevitability.

—*Some Platitudes Concerning the Drama*, John Galsworthy

WE have seen, in the historical development of the drama, that the first national impulse of England flamed high with the Elizabethans, culminated in the work of Shakespeare, and declined in the decadent drama of the Restoration; that it received a flickering warmth from the brilliant comedy of Sheridan and Goldsmith and then died to ashes in the bookish plays of the nineteenth century. Out of these dull ashes we are now to see a dramatic impulse arise, like the fabled phenix, in newness of life and beauty sufficient to win the title of "renaissance" or "new birth."

Matthew Arnold wrote in 1879: "In England we have no modern drama at all. Our vast society is not sufficiently united in a common view of life, a common ideal capable of serving as a basis for a modern English drama." Or, to go back to Taine's expression, which means exactly the same

thing, there was not a concordance of the forces of English national life. The simple classification of the Elizabethan Age no longer sufficed. Diversity of industry and of manners had broken up the unity of taste. The great middle class that was neither intellectual nor ignorant wearied of the artificial comedy and the well-made play imported from France. The theater fell into sad disrepute: it was held immoral by the most austere, and frivolous by the rest; it was not taken seriously by any, and the intellectuals turned to the more popular and leisurely art of the novel. Quite naturally the public distaste for the contemporary theater sent the dramatists back to the Elizabethan traditions. Looking toward the past for their golden age, the poets who essayed the dramatic form acknowledged Shakespeare as their master and sought to reanimate the shells of the seventeenth century in nineteenth-century England.

To the period of transition from the mediocrity of the early nineteenth century to the vigor of the nineties and the early twentieth century belong the names of Henry Arthur Jones, Sir Arthur Wing Pinero, and Oscar Wilde.

Henry Arthur Jones and The Beginning of the Modern English Stage

The work of Henry Arthur Jones has a historical rather than a literary and artistic significance. He is, and must remain, a link in the development of the modern drama, which is most fortunate for his permanency. The work of Pinero, Jones, and Wilde initiated a new movement in the English theater, the beginning of a drama expressive of modern English life.

Mr. Jones rebelled alike against the artificial mechanism of the French and the attempts of certain English dramatists, notably Robertson, to introduce realism. "The epitaph," he declares, "on all this realistic business will be: 'It does not matter what happens in kitchen middens.' " He aspired to be a practical dramatist, acknowledging the limitations of

the stage and not taking any great amount of trouble to overcome them; he was content to write plays which would "keep the theater open."

"As an artist," Professor Lewisohn remarks, "Jones is pathetically under the spell of every romantic folly and sentimental delusion. His popularity is inevitable; his serious fame is a menace to the English Drama." For Mr. Jones's own opinion of his place in the English theater the student may consult his *Renascence of the English Drama*.

In his repudiation alike of the realistic and idealistic, he achieved a result which Matthew Arnold calls "fantastic"—a sort of sentimental melodrama, of which *Harmony* and *Saints and Sinners* are good illustrations. In *Judah* we have the theme of religious zeal and faith-healing; quite a different sort of faith-healing from that of Pastor Sang, however. Mr. Jones does not care for "that bleak Norwegian," Ibsen, and undertook to make over *A Doll's House* to suit his more esthetic taste. Under the title *Breaking a Butterfly*, Nora is properly subdued, the objectionable Dr. Rank removed, and everybody made quite comfortable.

Jones achieved financial success with his melodramas and then turned to the making of *Michael and His Lost Angel* to satisfy his artistic sense. In *The Case of Rebellious Susan* we have rather an amusing exposition of the new problem of feminism. Lady Susan discovers her husband's infidelity and leaves home. She is persuaded by the moralizing manager—in this case an uncle—to return home, where her husband has been consoling himself for her absence with profligate women. Nothing has been gained by her rebellion, nothing solved by her return. Sir Richard lays down the law:

While you ladies without passions—or with distorted and defeated passions—are raving and trumpeting all over the country, that wise old grandmother of us all, Dame Nature, will choose her own darlings to carry on her schemes. Go home! Nature's darling woman is a stay-at-home woman, a woman who wants to be a good wife and mother, and cares very little for anything else.

Go home and don't worry the world any longer with this tiresome sexual business, for, take my word, it was settled once for all in the Garden of Eden and there's no more to be said about it. Go home!

And Lady Susan went—home to the profligate husband—and the problem was solved quite to the author's satisfaction and apparently that of the audience. One must bear in mind the position of women when this was written. Among the best known plays of Henry Arthur Jones, in America, are *Michael and His Lost Angel*, produced in 1896; *Mrs. Dane's Defense*, in 1900; *Dolly Reforming Herself*, in 1908; and *Mary Goes First*, in 1913. Any one of these may be chosen as an illustration of his work, but *Michael and His Lost Angel* is perhaps most accessible. It must be kept in mind that he has been producing with Shaw and Barrie and with Galsworthy and Barker in these earlier years. The same year which saw the initial production of *Dolly Reforming Herself* saw also Shaw's *Getting Married* and Barrie's *What Every Woman Knows*.

Whatever the future may have to say about his art, Mr. Jones has left nearly a hundred plays, published and unpublished; he has had many of them produced, winning both popularity and financial profit. For nearly thirty years he has continued to hold his place on the English stage.

STUDY OF MICHAEL AND HIS LOST ANGEL

The play has a double theme. One may consider as the main theme the reaction of the secret sin, which he has condemned in others, upon the priestly hero, or he may consider the larger conflict to be between love and duty, between the spirit and the flesh, between the "good and bad angels." However it may be decided, it is certain that we have another pair of those immortal star-crossed lovers with whom the world loves to weep. Romeo and Juliet, Héloïse and Abelard, Paolo and Francesca, Thaïs and her priestly lover, Hester and the Minister, Glory and the Christian—these are but a few in the world's literature who, like Audrey and

Michael, are parted by circumstance. It is one of the few plays which depict *man* as a sinner requiring expiation.

The action is not concentrated, and the dialogue is insincere. The speeches are made with an eye to the audience and the things which it must be told. Twice there is a deliberate rehearsing of past action to enlighten the audience. The setting is romantic. St. Decuman's island and the Italian monastery afford that romantic escape from the commonplace which satisfied Mr. Jones's longing for "mystery, beauty, and imagination." The moral retribution of the ending is quite in accord with the ancient traditions of "poetic justice." Audrey dies; the unhappy ending was inevitable. Michael loses all his worldly distinction and expiates his guilt with a hair-shirt in a monastery. This also was made inevitable after the events of the first scene. He had meted out punishment to others; he must not be more lenient with himself.

Michael Faversham is well drawn. He is austere, a bit bigoted in the beginning, but discovers his latent humanity before the close. Compare with Brand, with Pastor Sang, and with the Minister in *The Scarlet Letter*.

Audrey Lesden is a half-serious, half-mocking type of the worldly woman with great capability for good and great disposition for mischief. Compare with Mrs. Erlynne in *Lady Windermere's Fan*. She leaves the reader in doubt whether she is most saint or devil, but never in doubt as to her love.

Michael and His Lost Angel was produced simultaneously in London and New York, with Mr. Forbes-Robertson and Miss Marion Terry in the English cast, and Mr. Henry Miller and Miss Viola Allen in the American production. It was not a lasting success and has never been revived. The theme is probably too somber for the modern taste. It has been highly praised and as harshly criticized. Mr. Jones considers it his best work. In defense of the religious motive for the stage he writes: "Those who would deny to dramatists the right to depict religious life upon the stage should show either that religion has become a very unessential and

useless portion of human life—in which case the playwright can afford to treat it as a naturalist does an organ which has lapsed into a rudimentary state—or they should show why religion should not occupy the same part in the dramatic scheme that it is supposed to occupy in the world around him—shall we say *one-seventh?*”

We are tempted to quote from Mr. Jones also his defense of the characters from English middle-class life, which are often prosy and uninteresting. He says, “I can only urge in defense that it is impossible to suppose that God Himself can have taken any great degree of pride in creating four-fifths of the present inhabitants of the British Isles, and can hardly be imagined as contemplating His Image in the person of the average British tradesman without a suspicion that the mould is getting a little out of shape.”

QUESTIONS ON THE DRAMA

Was Michael's mother his “lost angel” or was Audrey Lesden?

What is the significance of the story of the mother and the portrait-painter?

Was Michael right or wrong in his treatment of Rose?

Right or wrong, does his act make his own tragic finale inevitable?

How would Pinero have disposed of the guilty woman in the case?

Why does not the usual double standard release the man in the case?

Is the charge of sentimentality in treatment deserved?

Why do you think the play was not popular?

Recall similar themes in dramatic literature.

Is death the solution of the problem?

How does contemporary drama handle the tragic finale?

See *The Easiest Way*.

Compare Michael with other priestly heroes of the world's literature.

How does Maeterlinck deal with the erring woman in *Sister Beatrice*?

Was Mr. Jones particularly fond of his type of the "pagan woman"? (See also Drusilla in *The Dancing Girl* and Vashti in *Judah*.)

Illustrate from Mr. Jones's own plays the progress of the English theater from melodrama to modern conceptions of dramatic art.

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

The Case of Rebellious Susan (double standard), 1894.

Michael and His Lost Angel (the ascetic and the temptress), 1896.

Judah (study of the priestly character and the pagan), 1890.

Mrs. Dane's Defense (the woman with a past), 1900.

Whitewashing Julia (the woman with a past), 1903.

Dolly Reforming Herself (modern comedy), 1908.

Mary Goes First (modern comedy), 1913. Published by the Macmillan Co., *Plays of Henry Arthur Jones*; also in the list of Samuel French. *Michael and His Lost Angel* in *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Sir Arthur Wing Pinero: The Drama of Emotion

Pinero is the second figure in the English transitional drama; second from the point of dramatic movement, not in chronology. The student must keep constantly in mind that an exact chronology in contemporary movements is impossible. A young man may be named as an exemplar of an early movement, or an older playwright may have looked farther toward the future than his contemporaries. In point of years, Jones was but four years older than Pinero, and they were producing during the same twenty years (1890-1910), but in the hands of Pinero the English drama went much farther toward the modern than in the work of Jones

After a few farces and melodramas, which have no more serious relation to dramatic art, one critic remarks, than the works of the Duchess have to English literature, *The Profligate* was produced, in 1889, with the distinguished Mr. Forbes-Robertson, in the title rôle. It was pronounced an epoch-making play, but its theme is old, and it depends upon impossible coincidence for its dénouement. Before the production of *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, in 1893, something very significant had happened. The Independent Theater had opened in 1891 with Ibsen's *Ghosts*, and contact with the stern realism of the Norwegian drama modified the English theater after that time. With *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith* of the next year Pinero advanced still further in free and fearless handling of difficult problems. This promise is sustained in *The Benefit of the Doubt*, wavers and becomes uncertain, revives in *Iris*, and slumps once more. The old Pinero speaks in *The Thunderbolt* and *Mid-Channel*. *The Mind the Paint Girl* (1912) is a frank concession to the popular taste not to be considered seriously. The work of Pinero has developed along with the changing thought of his time. It generally gives what the public is demanding in that particular year. "This cumulative ability to give of the best that he knew is the essence of the achievement of Sir Arthur Pinero," concludes P. P. Howe in *Dramatic Portraits*.

The theme which recurs again and again in Pinero's plays is that of the woman with a past. Can she come back to respectability and happiness? Pinero demonstrates in many different ways that she cannot. In *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* it is too evidently coincidence that brings about the tragedy: the tragedy was there all the time within, but becomes external when the former lover insists upon marrying into the family. Compare this play with *The Easiest Way* by Eugene Walters and note that the drama has progressed in the latter play to the point where life is held more tragic than suicide. Mrs. Ebbsmith, *Iris*, and Paula Tanqueray are the most famous of Pinero's wayward women;

the part of Paula has been a favorite with many noted actresses, among them Mrs. Patrick Campbell and Eleanora Duse. Compare Pinero's tragic treatment of the theme with the playfulness of Jones in *Whitewashing Julia* and of Wilde in *Lady Windermere's Fan*. Just for a change Pinero gives us a chance to weigh an erring man in the balance. In *The Profligate* we have the same question applied to the male sinner: can he come back to domestic happiness? The ending which the author preferred says he cannot. The usual sentiment of Pinero's day was that he can, being a man. Aubrey Tanqueray, who was probably as great a sinner as Paula, never questions *his* fitness to live beside the purity of *Ellean*—only Paula's. Sir Lyolf in *Michael and His Lost Angel* declares there are only two kinds of women in the world, the good and the bad. There are, presumably, all shades and varieties of men. It was an age when the double standard was rigidly observed; there was no future for a woman who had slipped from respectability, but the vices of men were condoned.

Walter Pritchard Eaton remarks:

As each dramatic season looms and fades, the sharp brains of the dramatists raise a continual clatter over Man-and-Wife. The condition of matrimony seems to them a large and malodorous cheese, out of which each nimbly trims his slice, stuffs it into our mouths and pushes us out of the theater. We have for our pains only a bad taste and hints of indigestion.

Stay a bachelor or a bachelor maid. Then Pinero cannot get you, the Frenchmen cannot get you, Eugene Walter and the Tenderloin School cannot get you. Or better yet don't go to the theater and don't buy a book. Then you'll be able to marry, live happily and bring up children.

Either *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* or *Mid-Channel* may be selected for study; both should be read. *The Benefit of the Doubt* is extremely interesting because of the clever dramatic device, the overheard conversation.

STUDY OF MID-CHANNEL

The theme is the difficulty attending the harmonious adjustment of man and wife in middle age. The problems of married life are comparatively recent themes in the drama. They began in the eighteenth century with the so-called bourgeois or domestic drama and were treated naturalistically by Ibsen and Strindberg. *The Dance of Death* is a study of hate in the marriage relation, and *When the New Wine Blooms* is a study of readjustment. The second marriage is presented in Pinero's *His House in Order*. The Blundells, in *Mid-Channel*, do not hate each other; they are simply bored and have not the patience and forbearance to weather it through. In the very nature of things, drama, which is conflict, if it deal with marriage at all, must deal with marital strife.

The interest is sustained and the crisis fairly advanced in the opening scenes. Note the warning of the end in Zoe's declaration that if she ever commits suicide it will be in the winter-time. The moralizing of the author's mouthpiece, Mottram, is a bit wearisome, and the dialect with which the author has seen fit to endow him anything but naturalistic, to an American ear at least. Why so many of Pinero's characters insist upon using the vulgarism "ain't," although apparently fairly well educated, is an astonishment to the reader. Note the dramatic device employed in the remark of Ethel to her mother about the tiny men and women seen from the balcony. That prepares the way for the final shudder when the "accident" occurs.

In the characterization of the Blundells, the husband is a little coarse, fond of drink, growing flat-footed, irritable, and stodgy, and quite content to grow old. The wife is approaching forty but clinging to youth; pathetic in her love of children, which is forcibly drawn to our attention twice in the play; surrounding herself with young men, but not immoral, just bored, and seeking to forget it in "frisking about every

night." There is nothing else for her to do, we are told. It was before the day when women could undertake public service and fill their empty lives with something more worthy than "tame robins." The quarrels become more frequent, and over the veriest trifles. They cannot agree upon a hotel for the contemplated pleasure-trip, and the husband leaves in a huff. Blundell's character is shown by the fact that, although he really loves his own wife, he sets up an expensive establishment and turns to women and drink. In retaliation, Zoe takes a lover. They are in mid-channel, and the waves are rough. They are both very sick of the separation, but the man refuses to pardon the fault which his wife has forgiven in him. It is not so much infidelity that counts as *who is guilty*. If the woman, her life is the proper forfeit, as the finale demonstrates. And yet as she so pathetically remarked, there was so much good in Zoe after all. Zoe is one of the most appealing of Pinero's women; one who has seen Miss Ethel Barrymore in the part will not soon forget the pathos and tragedy of her fate.

Peter Mottram is the stock character of English drama, the adviser and confidential friend of the family. Compare Cayley Drummle in *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* and the old uncle in *The Case of Rebellious Susan*. He is a bachelor but quite capable of managing the matrimonial affairs of his friends. In this particular play, Peter Mottram is the mouth-piece of author:

Marriage, mark you, at its best and brightest, the happiest and the luckiest of married couples have got to cross that wretched Ridge. However happy the first half of the journey may be there's the rough-and-tumble of mid-channel to negotiate. Some arrive there quicker than others, some later; it depends on wind and tide. But they get there; and a bad time it is—a time when travelin'-companions see nothin' but the spots on each other's yellow faces, and when innumerable kind words and kind acts are clean forgotten.

To Blundell he says,

It's when the sun's getting round to the West—it's when men are where we are now that they are most liable to get into mischief.

Peter calmly counsels reunion in the face of the husband's disloyalty, but when Zoe admits that she too has erred, the old friend becomes coldly virtuous:

Obviously it's impossible for Mr. and Mrs. Blundell to live together, after what has transpired.

We had better come at once to the object of this meetin'. The best method of providin' for the future safety and happiness, we hope, of the unfortunate lady who's gone and made a bit of a munge of her affairs.

The moral of the play—and there is a very obvious moral—is, have a care in the treacherous waters of middle life or you will wreck your craft. More especially, have a care, if you are a woman; “for women there are no life-preservers.”

Important, too, is the woman's statement:

Our marriage was doomed long, long before we reached *Mid-Channel*. From the very beginning . . . From the moment we agreed that we'd never be encumbered in our career with any . . . children.

We didn't look at the time when we should need another interest to bind us together.

QUESTIONS ON THE DRAMA

Is the theme of *Mid-Channel* a true analysis of middle-aged married life?

Is middle life a critical period for both man and woman?

Name some modern novels which emphasize this unrest.

Could Zoe plead “nothing to do” as an excuse for unrest to-day?

Did either of the Blundells have a reasonable excuse for separation?

Is the dialogue natural?

Is the structure economical or diffuse?

Select two instances of “dramatic device” from this play.

Did Theo Blundell really love his wife, or was it simply the desire of possession?

Did Zoe err because of weakness, or of strength, or through circumstance?

How did the work of Ibsen affect Pinero?

Compare Hedda Gabler with Zoe and Paula Tanqueray.

Compare *Mid-Channel* with *The Fugitive* by Galsworthy.

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

The Second Mrs. Tanqueray (1893), *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith (1895) (W. H. Baker, Boston).

The Benefit of the Doubt (1895) (Sergel, Chicago).

Iris (1901) (W. H. Baker).

His House in Order (1906) (W. H. Baker).

Mid-Channel (1909) (W. H. Baker).

Social Plays by Pinero in four volumes published by E. P. Dutton & Co. Introduction by Clayton Hamilton in separate volumes, W. H. Baker, Boston.

Oscar Wilde: The Drama of Conversation

Oscar Wilde began his career of esthetic pose, social prominence, and literary success in 1878, after distinguishing himself at Oxford. He was an exponent of the "esthetic movement" which captivated the young men of the last two decades of the nineteenth century; a movement which began with Ruskin, Morris, and Swinburne, and produced much that was truly artistic in creative work.

Wilde is the link between Sheridan and Shaw in the English drama. He is much more nearly related to the intrigue and polished wit of Congreve than to most of his contemporaries. He makes no pretense at reality; his contribution to the English theater is style, and the characteristic feature of his work is a brilliant dialogue. The drama of conversation began with Sheridan and Congreve and culminated in Wilde. By the drama of conversation we understand sharp, concentrated, unrhctorical speech as opposed to the discursive and rhetorical eloquence of the earlier stage. Elizabethan dramatists were provided with long speeches which were delivered

in an artificial and stilted manner from the aprons of the stage which projected out into the audience. This was the drama of rhetoric. One can appreciate the difficulty of finding actors to interpret the plays when the form suddenly switched from the drama of rhetoric, with its bombast and fury, to the tense quiet emotion of a modern crisis.

P. P. Howe, in *Dramatic Portraits*, says that Oscar Wilde took the drama seriously, and, with one of Wilde's own paradoxes, adds that that is probably why he wrote for it so trivially. It was perhaps one of those things "too important to ever be serious about." It is the delightful irresponsibility of his plays that appeals. Wilde himself speaks through his characters with the most absurd inconsequence, perverting conventional opinion, and often expressing a deep truth in the process. He delights in antithesis, in paradoxical statement. Much of the pleasure of his comedies comes from the joy with which the reader comes upon the unexpected—the unexpected turn of a phrase such as, "Don't be led astray into the paths of virtue," or the unexpected self-sacrifice of a bad woman, as in *Lady Windermere's Fan*. The greater part of the Victorian Age was characterized by moral primness and self-satisfied complacency, and it was this attitude which Wilde loved to satirize.

There are certain stock characters in all of his comedies—the good and stupid women; the good and stupider men; the managing dowager, appearing as the Duchess of Berwick and again as Lady Bracknell—but the types which Wilde drew best were the clever woman with the doubtful past and the languid man of the world who could rise to heights of unsuspected virtue and heroism in an emergency. Lord Darlington was such a man and Mrs. Erlynne such a woman. His characterization of women is not equal to Pinero's, but he does not, like Jones, divide his women into two classes, good and bad. There are fine shades in the drawing. *A Woman of No Importance* is plainly a case of one more sinned against than sinning. The adventuress of *The Ideal Husband* is an evil force to be got rid of; Mrs. Erlynne, in

spite of her evil and brazen life, has an impulse to a great deed. All three women are of the type known to the stage as "wayward women," yet how different in characterization! The fourth comedy which holds its place to-day in popular favor, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, is merely the play upon a pun: it is the spirit of youth, and, in its dramatic preparation, one of the best of Wilde's comedies.

The tragedies of Oscar Wilde are less interesting and less significant. The unusual ethics of *The Duchess of Padua* and the revolting lust of *Salome* are not Wilde at his best.

A Few Examples of Wilde's Antitheses

He has one of those weak natures that are not susceptible to influence.

The youth of the present have absolutely no respect for dyed hair.

I can resist anything except temptation.

I assure you the number of things I and my poor dear sister were taught not to understand was quite extraordinary.

I can't understand this modern mania for curates—I think it is most irreligious.

Do you know, I think good people do a great deal of harm in this world. Certainly the greatest harm they do is to make badness of such extraordinary importance.

Life is far too important a thing to ever talk seriously about.

A man who moralizes is usually a hypocrite and a woman who moralizes is invariably plain.

In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants and the other is getting it. The last is the real tragedy.

The Inconsequent Conversation

Every one has been maddened sometime by seeking a bit of information and being obliged to wait while the answer was being built up clause on clause with utterly inconsequent

remark, finally coming back to the question after going "all around Robin Hood's barn and in at the back door." Before completing one sentence another has been suggested, and once set going the mind works on quite automatically. Some one mentions a large country; that reminds Lady Caroline of drafts; drafts remind her of mufflers; mufflers remind her of her husband, because he refuses to wear one; and so it goes on indefinitely. Wilde is a master at building up the speech of inconsequence. The speeches of Lady Bracknell in *The Importance of Being Earnest* are excellent illustrations.

STUDY OF Lady Windermere's Fan

This play has often been given in England and on the Continent and has been produced in America. At the first performance Miss Marion Terry took the rôle of Mrs. Erlynne. Julia Arthur appeared in the American production.

The theme is the capability for heroic action in an unscrupulous adventuress under the impulse of latent maternal affection. It is treated half seriously, half mockingly. By permitting Mrs. Erlynne to "explain" and accomplish her designs in spite of the scandal the treatment is weakened.

The structure of the plot is improbable. It is unlikely that Lord Windermere would submit so patiently to blackmail and run the risk of incurring suspicion by paying large sums of money to an adventuress. It was extremely unlikely in the first place that Lady Windermere should have been in such utter ignorance of her mother's existence. These improbabilities are quite successfully concealed by the interest of the story. Note the use of asides, soliloquies, and coincidence in the play. Note the likeness of the screen-scene to that of *The School for Scandal*. Imagine this same theme treated naturalistically by Strindberg or Hauptmann and fancy how differently it would have ended.

With regard to characterization, compare Mrs. Erlynne with Paula Tanqueray. With Zoe Blundell. Compare Lord Darlington with Peter Mottram. Compare Lady Winder-

mere with Ellean Tanqueray. Compare the Duchess of Berwick with Lady Wishfort in Congreve's *Way of the World*. Note the stock characters which Wilde employs, and the way in which the character of "dear Agatha" is expressed by two words which suit every crisis of her affairs: "Yes, mama!"

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Why is the work of Oscar Wilde sometimes called an interlude in English drama?

What is the dramatic significance of Lady Windermere's check-book soliloquy?

Find the prototype of Mrs. Erlynne in English drama.

Is the theme treated seriously?

Does the ending satisfy the dramatic sense?

How would Pinero have ended it? Or Ibsen? Or Strindberg?

Is Lord Windermere not stupid in his conduct of the affair?

Study the dramatic preparation of the first act.

Is the dual rôle of blackmailing adventuress and protecting mother convincing?

Select examples of Wilde's epigrams from this play.

Find illustration of the use of mechanical contrivances.

What is the real charm of the play?

Is Lady Windermere treated sympathetically?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

Lady Windermere's Fan (1892), *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

The Importance of Being Earnest (1895), Samuel French.

A Woman of No Importance (1893), *Modern Library* (Boni & Liveright).

Salome (1893). (These two in one volume, *Modern Library*, Boni & Liveright).

Salome, illustrated by Beardsley (Dodd, Mead & Co.).

THE ENGLISH DRAMA OF THOUGHT: SHAW, GALSWORTHY, BARRIE

The distinguishing quality of the new drama is *sincerity*, in theme, in treatment of story, and in technical construction. Mainly it is a reaction from the false theatricality and shallow sentimentality of the play of twenty years ago. The refreshing breath of sincerity stirs through its every part. The passion for truth is, indeed, so marked that the English group has been called the School of Sincerity.

—*The New Movement in the Theater*, Sheldon Cheney

Shaw: The Drama of Satire

Bernard Shaw is not a dramatist in the sense that Shakespeare was a dramatist, or in the sense that Molière was a dramatist; he is a writer with a philosophy and a clever knack of stage-tricks which he uses in order to proclaim that philosophy. He found an established theater ready for production and a copyright law to protect publication; he accepted them as he found them. He has been more concerned with content than with form and has done very little to advance the English stage.

It is not surprising to find so many and diverse opinions about the man and his art when we consider how many faces, or masks, he presents to the world. An avowed follower of Ibsen and believer in individualism; a musical critic and defender of Wagner; a socialist disciple of Karl Marx; a preacher of morality, avowing atheism; an ascetic and vegetarian; a revolutionist dispensing charity instead of anarchistic tracts; a Puritan smuggling Nietzsche into England; a jester, content to shake his cap and bells while he stoutly whacks the shins of his grinning public with his stave. Such is the complex personality of the man Shaw.

Huneker muses in *Iconoclasts*: "We wonder what sort of drama this remarkable Hibernian would have produced if he had been a flesh-eater. If he is so brilliant on bran, what could he not have accomplished on blood!" Shaw began his literary career with novels and critical reviews into

which he managed to slip many dangerous doctrines from his favorite writers, Nietzsche, Marx, Ibsen, and Strindberg. Then he turned to the stage with its broader platform. He reverts to the comedy of humors in his treatment often; his characters tend to become types. While the dialogue is naturalistic the characters all speak with the keen intellectual analysis of Shaw, just as Wilde's characters scintillate with their creator's wit. Shaw is much too intent upon exposition to develop character; his play is lost in the thesis. It is a drama of intellect rather than of passion, loitering over its comic interludes with full appreciation.

The popularity of Mr. Shaw, especially in America, where his books and plays were first received appreciatively, is probably due in large part to his buffoonery. The public was at first quite content to receive him as a clever clown, but that day is past. He wrote in *The Saturday Review* in 1898: "For ten years past, with an unprecedented pertinacity and obstinacy, I have been dinning it into the public head that I am an extraordinarily witty, brilliant and clever man. That is now part of the public opinion of England; and no power in heaven or earth will ever change it. I may dodder and dote. I may potboil and platitudinise. I may become the butt and the block of all the bright, original spirits of the rising generation, but my reputation shall not suffer: it is built up fast and solid, like Shakespeare's, on an impregnable basis of dogmatic reiteration."

Mr. Shaw has not doddered nor doted, but he has been shaken by the war, along with other English writers, and his latest plays, *Heartbreak House* and *Back to Methuselah*, are generally considered less strong than the work produced during the first decade of the present century. With *Saint Joan* he reaches his former vigor and many critics say the climax of his work.

Three things he has assailed with great vigor: poverty, that dull degrading poverty which entails hunger and cold and dirt; war; and the immorality of sex. In *Arms and the Man*, so familiar to music-lovers as *The Chocolate Soldier*, he

satirized the false ideas of military glory. *O'Flaherty*, *V. C.*, and *Augustus Does His Bit* are delicious dramatic morsels published since the World War. "Truth-telling is not compatible with the defense of the realm," remarks Mr. Shaw; "that is why I had to withhold *Heartbreak House* from the footlights during the war."

The drama of satire seizes upon some defect in our social institutions or some social injustice and exaggerates it by isolating and showing it up. If the satirist is possessed of a sense of humor he makes farce or comedy out of the situation; if he is gloomy and morose it turns to tragedy beneath his touch. Shaw is decidedly a humorist; he tells the truth and his audience laughs. "Truth," he declares, "is always funny." Ibsen satirized institutions: Shaw goes deeper; he satirizes the emotions which are the basis of our civilization. He exposes our misconceptions of things, the hero of history; see *The Man of Destiny* and *Cæsar and Cleopatra* as examples. He even dared in his late war stories to show how unromantic the life of a war hero might be.

Do you think we should have got an army without conscription if domestic life had been as happy as people say it is?

Well, between you and me and the wall, Sir Pearce, I think the less we say about it until the war's over the better.

For freedom in the relation of the sexes Shaw wages his bitterest battle. "Love to be love must be free," is his thesis approached in many ways; in *Getting Married* and *Candida* may be found famous examples.

"Duty," declares Shaw, "is what one should never do," and proceeds to illustrate his epigram by exposing self-interest parading under the cloak of duty in *Widower's Houses* and *Mrs. Warren's Profession*.

Love as a great cosmic force which uses humanity, and especially the woman, to perfect the race is the theme of *Man and Superman*, an idea held by Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Very interesting in this play also is the author's diagram of Hell and Heaven. In Hell are the Idealists and the dream-

ers, in Heaven are the Masters of Reality; illusion and romance have disappeared. We should expect Mr. Shaw to create a new heaven and hell according to his own ideas and not accept the orthodox picture.

Let us listen to his own confession of faith: "I am not an ordinary playwright in general practice. I am a specialist in immoral and heretical plays. My reputation has been gained by my persistent struggle to force the public to reconsider its morals. In particular, I regard much current morality as to economic and sexual relations as disastrously wrong; and I regard certain doctrines of the Christian religion as understood in England to-day with abhorrence. I write plays with the deliberate object of converting the nation to my opinions in these matters."

There is nothing of "art for art's sake" in the work of Bernard Shaw. It is impossible to do him justice by the reading of a single play. Elimination is such a painful process that one should know as many of them as time will permit. Three very representative plays are *The Man of Destiny*, as an illustration of a satire on the false idea of the historical hero; *Man and Superman*; and *Candida*.

The stage directions are fully as remarkable as the plays and should be read very carefully. The prefaces are even more important; Huneker declares that, whatever the future may do with the plays of Shaw, the prefaces will remain literature wherever the English language is known. The plays most popular in America are *Arms and the Man* and *The Devil's Disciple*, both of which were included in the repertory of Richard Mansfield. *The Devil's Disciple* was presented in 1923 by the Theater Guild in New York very successfully.

We may well allow Mr. Shaw to have the last word about his work. He says in the preface to *Arms and the Man*:

I can no longer be satisfied with fictitious morals and fictitious good conduct, shedding fictitious glory on overcrowding, disease, crime, war, cruelty, infant mortality, and all the other commonplaces of civilization which drive men to the theater to make foolish pretences

that these things are progress, science, morals, religion, patriotism, imperial supremacy, national greatness and all the other names the newspapers call them. . . .

To me the tragedy and comedy of life lie in the consequences, sometimes terrible, sometimes ludicrous, of our persistent attempts to found our institutions on the ideals suggested to our imaginations.

STUDY OF *Candida*

The theme is the eternal triangle from quite a new point of view. A woman must choose between two men who think her necessary to their happiness, and she chooses the weaker, because he needs her most. That the weaker happens to be her husband the author treats quite incidentally; it is not a concession to conventional morality. The play presents a striking satire upon the conception of the woman as a "clinging vine" to whom her husband is an oak of strength.

From the point of view of structure, note the new twist to the eternal triangle and the use of suspense. Note the effective climax of the curtain in Act One where Eugene goes out triumphantly after sowing the seeds of doubt in the complacent mind of the clergyman.

EUGENE: I am the happiest of men.

MORELL: *So was I—an hour ago.*

The irreparable mischief of suspicion is wrought so soon. Study the ineffective conversation of Eugene and Candida in Act Three, and the ending of reconciliation.

Of the characters, James Morell is a Christian Socialist. He is popular, preaches beautifully, and is badly spoiled but sincere. Contrast Morell with the stage clergyman as usually depicted. "Ask James's mother and three sisters what it cost to save James the trouble of doing anything but be strong and clever and happy"; "Ask me what it costs to be James's mother and three sisters and wife and mother to his children all in one," says Candida. But the husband is entirely unsuspecting of his dependency; in his own eyes he is a tower of strength for the protection of his wife. When

called upon to state his case he offers his strength for her defense. In the final scene, grown strangely humble, he admits, "You are my wife, my mother, my sisters: you are the sum of all loving care to me."

Candida, in spite of her candor and advanced ideas, is a thoroughly womanly woman, domestic in her tastes. Her hat is no sooner off than she is in the kitchen peeling onions, filling lamps, and doing away with the disorder of her absence. She stands between her husband and annoyance. "I build a castle of comfort and indulgence and love for him, and stand sentinel always to keep the little vulgar cares out." She can hurt with her calm candor, but she can also heal with her love. There is much of the maternal in her affection. She embodies a favorite idea of Mr. Shaw's that the woman seeks in marriage, not protection, but something to mother and protect. See *What Every Woman Knows* by Barrie. Candida is held by no bonds, and no consciousness of purity nor convention will hold her if her husband fails to keep her by the law of love. Note the much-discussed passage of the shawl.

Eugene Marchbanks is interesting and amusing as a depiction of the author's idea of all that a poet should be—and is not. Granville Barker was the original Eugene.

Burgess, Prossy, and Lexy furnish the so-called comic relief.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

How does the motherly attitude of Candida compare with that of Laura in *The Father*?

Is Burgess a convincing type for the father of Candida?

How does James Morell compare with the stage clergyman as usually depicted?

Is Candida an unwomanly woman? Is she an immoral woman? Unmoral?

What is the purpose of the assumption of madness in the house?

What is the place of Prossy and the curate?

Has Mr. Shaw been very happy in his characterization of the poet?

Has he made the most of his opportunity in the scene between Eugene and Candida?

What is the poet's secret, do you think?

Was he finally disillusioned or did he go out to despair?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

Widowers' Houses (1892).

The Philanderer (1893).

Mrs. Warren's Profession (1893).

Published in single volume entitled *Three Unpleasant Plays*.

Arms and the Man (1894).

Candida (1894).

The Man of Destiny (1895).

You Never Can Tell (1896).

Volume entitled *Four Unpleasant Plays*.

The Devil's Disciple (1897).

Cæsar and Cleopatra (1898).

Captain Brassbound's Conversion (1899).

Three Plays for Puritans.

Man and Superman, study of woman and the life-force (1903).

John Bull's Other Island, satire on national characteristics (1904).

Major Barbara, arraignment of charity and religion (1905).

Getting Married, marriage after love ceases to exist immoral (1908).

Fanny's First Play, amusing satire on critics (1911).

Androcles and the Lion, ridicule of our idealism (1912).

Heartbreak House (1918), produced by Theater Guild, New York.

O'Flaherty. V. C.

Augustus Does His Bit.

Plays of the Great War, with three other titles in volume entitled *Heartbreak House*.

Back to Methuselah (1921), produced in three parts by Theater Guild. A study of creative evolution.

Saint Joan, study of The Maid of Orleans (1924).

Shaw's complete works are published by Brentano's, New York, in above form. Many plays may be secured in separate volumes from Samuel French.

Galsworthy: The Drama of Social Injustice

The dozen or so plays of John Galsworthy, extending over a period a little more than a dozen years of the twentieth century, mark the culmination of serious English drama. Here we have the continuation of the social ideas of Björnson, the expression of group-emotion foreshadowed in *The Editor* and *The New System*, and brought to brilliant perfection in *The Weavers* by Hauptmann, exemplified in *Strife*. *The Weavers* appeared in 1893 and was produced at the Court Theater. *Strife* did not appear until 1909. There is no doubt that the theme was largely suggested by the German dramatist, but its treatment is Galsworthy's own.

It is interesting to compare the dramatic methods of Galsworthy and his contemporary, Shaw. While the latter looked upon the stage as a platform and deliberately sought to dictate manners and morals, Mr. Galsworthy declares, "I look upon the stage as the great beacon light of civilization, but the drama should lead the social thought of the time and not direct or dictate it." Shaw accompanies his crises with a great deal of noise and violence; the crises of Galsworthy creep upon us as a natural consequence of his characters and their situation. Shaw presents a situation and loudly declaims against it; Galsworthy presents his picture fairly, gives us both sides, and then leaves us to decide what we are going to do about it, without remark. Compare *Arms and the Man* and its polemics against war with *Justice* and

its almost colorless picture of the futility of the penal code.

It is interesting to compare the dialogue of Galsworthy with that of another famous contemporary, Mr. Henry Arthur Jones. The characters of Jones speak with an eye upon the audience; the characters of Galsworthy are caught in the act of speaking. Compare the speeches of Michael in *Michael and His Lost Angel* with the faltering replies of Falder in *Justice*. In his platitudes concerning the drama from *The Inn of Tranquility*, Mr. Galsworthy has something to say about dialogue:

The art of writing true dramatic dialogue is an austere art, denying itself all license, grudging every sentence devoted to the mere machinery of the play, suppressing jokes and epigrams severed from character, relying for fun and pathos on the fun and tears of life. From start to finish good dialogue is hand-made, like good lace; clear, of fine texture, furthering with each thread the harmony and strength of a design to which all must be subordinated.

Apply his own test to the plays he has written. Apply it to Wilde, who never suppressed an epigram, and to Shaw, who loves to loiter over a bit of comic relief, to the rhetoric of Mr. Jones and the soliloquies and asides of Pinero, and you will see how far the dramatic dialogue has progressed in the last two decades.

It is interesting to compare the characterization of Galsworthy with that of his contemporaries. He does not present a few types like Wilde, or pull the strings for a set of marionettes as Shaw often does, but he has given us the largest range of convincing characters of any modern English dramatist. In *Strife*, for instance, where he is dealing with groups, John Anthony represents Capital and David Roberts represents Labor, but each is a man, strongly defined, and they are strangely alike in their unswerving allegiance to their convictions. Whether we are following the career of the drunken ne'er-do-well, Jones, or the happy-go-lucky philanthropist, Wellwyn, we are impressed with the humanity of it all. The late play, *Windows*, with its study of the con-

sciousness of a servant who refuses to be "rescued" and follows her own instincts, throbs with life—a life little known and understood.

The basis of all the plays is a passionate love of justice. It is quite significant that the first play Mr. Galsworthy ever wrote, *The Silver Box*, closes with the bitter accusation:

Call this justice? What about 'im? 'E got drunk! 'E took the purse. 'E took the purse but it's 'is money got 'im off! *Justice!*

This play is a study of the rich thief and the poor thief and the contrast of their standing in the eyes of the law. It may be called a drama of social contrast. *Joy*, the lightest of the plays, is a study in egoism, where all the characters seek their own way and justify themselves quite cleverly for doing so. "When it 's ourselves, it 's always a special case." The lack of understanding between mother and daughter, so favorite a theme for modern fiction, is brilliantly put in a single line:

A woman and a girl—there's the tree of life between them.

With the third effort we have the crisis of Capital and Labor during an industrial deadlock. *Strife* is usually considered Galsworthy's greatest play. In *The Eldest Son* it is again the social discrimination which refuses to mete out to the rich man's son the restitution demanded from the under keeper. It is also a protest against the time-honored notion that a woman's honor can be healed by marriage. This was voiced by Oscar Wilde in *A Woman of No Importance*, and again more strongly still in the *Hindle Wakes* of Stanley Houghton. Then, in 1910, came *Justice*, which pitted a very small, weak man against a very large system, with the result that the system was reformed immediately. *The Pigeon* depicts more crushing of the individual beneath the system, but this time it is the system of organized charity. Compare the unimpassioned, whimsical treatment of *The Pigeon* with Shaw's bitter arraignment in *Major Barbara*. In *The*

Fugitive we have the tragedy of a woman's failure to establish her freedom after leaving an impossible marriage.

The two plays of Mr. Galsworthy produced in 1922, *Loyalties* and *Windows*, have not added to his lasting fame as a dramatist. To be sure, *Loyalties* had a successful run and was acclaimed by certain critics as the masterpiece of the distinguished playwright's art, and *Windows* was a failure; but to the careful reader there is more of Galsworthy in *Windows* than in *Loyalties*. Here, again, one must discriminate between the popular and actable play and the enduring drama, and that is particularly difficult in the case of contemporary plays. May we loiter a moment to thank the author of *Windows* for the following bit of philosophy:

In my opinion Nature made the individual believe 'e's goin' to live after 'e's dead, just to keep him living while 'e's alive—otherwise 'e 'd 'a' died out.

The distinguishing feature of the drama of Galsworthy is its fairness. He is content to lead the social thought by presenting pictures of life, without exaggeration, without argument. He leaves his audience to solve the problem he has presented. He does not line up all the good on the one side and all the evil on the other but looks in all impartiality at both sides of the question or problem, and then pleads for a better understanding. His legal mind is shown in the way he builds his plots like pleas in a case of law, never resorting to melodrama. He discards coincidence and mechanical contrivance and reduces his dialogue to simple austerity. He employs the realistic method but does not lose in the process his artistry nor his spiritual discernment. It is realism transcended by that indefinite something which is the spiritual understanding of its creator. There is the seeing eye "which does not flinch"; there is also the understanding heart which would give of its fairest, truest, and best.

STUDY OF Strife

The theme is the conflict between Capital and Labor, which

ends in compromise and renders all the struggle and distress useless. Note the irony of the closing words:

HARNESSE: A woman dead; and the two best men broken!

TENCH: D'you know, sir, these terms, they're the *very same* we drew up and put to both sides before the fight began? All this—all this—and—what for?

It is not a one-sided conflict with the right altogether with one group. John Anthony is fighting as surely for that which he believes to be sane and sound as his antagonist, and the author is very careful not to take sides. To make the tragedy complete the overthrow of the obstinate leaders was necessary.

So—they've done us both down, Mr. Anthony?

Both broken men, my friend Roberts!

Study the dramatic situations in the structure of the play, and the naturalness of the whole problem, which develops between noon and six in the afternoon; note also the mob psychology of the strikers' meeting, which is swayed first in one direction and then in another. How appalling the picture of misery revealed by the women into which the manager's wife enters, thinking to bridge with "her gloved hands the troubles of the century!" Notice how Roberts and Anthony dominate the action.

Of the characters, John Anthony, stern, unyielding man of iron, is a foeman worthy of the fiery Roberts. Those who know him best know that he will never yield.

I have had to do with "men" for fifty years; I've always stood up to them; I have never been beaten yet. I have fought the men of this Company four times, and four times I have beaten them. It has been said that times have changed; if they have I have not changed with them.

Turning to his son, who has taken the attitude of compromise on the ground of humanity, he says

These are the words of a generation that I do not understand; the words of a soft breed.

Even Roberts, his enemy Roberts, yields his tribute to the character of the chairman when he cries:

Don't tell me ye've signed them terms!
For the love of God, I *reckoned on ye!*"

David Roberts has all the courage of his opponent and a passionate spirit of revolt which will do anything, endure anything, for a complete victory. The two men, facing each other in Act One, sound the warning of the coming conflict:

ANTHONY: There can be only one master, Roberts.
ROBERTS: Then, be Gad, it'll be us.

Note how the directors are individualized, and the terse sentences which describe them in the stage-directions. Compare with the long descriptions of Shaw. Is Scantlebury, with his one sentence of description, any less vividly drawn than Burgess with half a page?

Contrast the ending by compromise and conciliation with *The Weavers*.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Are both sides impartially presented in this conflict?

Is the dialogue natural? Economical?

How much did Madge Thomas have to do with the outcome?

Does the author intimate that second-rate men run the world with compromise and concession?

How does life treat Anthony and Roberts alike?

How does the dramatist employ contrast in three instances?

What is the significance of the director's wife who would go to Spain?

What is the great irony of the play?

Since it ends in conciliation, can it be termed a tragedy?

What upsets the balance of the opposing forces and creates confusion?

Without the sacrifice of Annie Roberts as a climax, what would become of the plot?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

The Silver Box, study in social contrasts in law (1906).

Joy, study in egoism and chasm between two generations (1907).

Strife, conflict between Capital and Labor (1909).

Justice, futility of prison reform (1910).

The Pigeon, delightful study of irresponsible charity (1912).

The Fugitive, woman and freedom (1913).

Loyalties, study of race-prejudice and class clannishness (1922).

Windows (1922), produced by Theater Guild in 1923.

Published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

Strife is included in *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Barrie: The Drama of Fantasy

Mr. Thomas H. Dickinson, in his second series of *Contemporary Dramatists*, declares that James M. Barrie has strengthened his hold, since the publication of the first series, on a primary place in the drama of his time. Professor Lewisohn mentions him not at all, and *Aspects of the Modern Drama* contains but one casual allusion. Mr. Barrie is quite frankly accused of being sentimental, and sentiment is anathema to the modern critic, which may account for the indifference of certain dramatic essayists. There is no doubt that he has held his place very steadily in popular favor since he turned from the production of novels to the theater in the early years of the century. One must separate Barrie the novelist, who belongs to the nineteenth century, from Barrie the dramatist, who belongs to the twentieth, and draw his own conclusions as to which form of literary expression he has most enriched. In the drama he has not allied himself with any modern movement but has brought to the theater a certain freshness and whimsicality which is all his own.

Sometimes he is content with a Puck performance of sheer mischief, as in *Alice-Sit-by-the-Fire*; again he soars into the

realm of fantasy and transports his audience with him bodily, as in *Peter Pan* and *Dear Brutus*. He is very capable of combining reality and fantasy in a most confusing manner. Monsieur Récouly likens these flights into fantasy to the slow rising of an aëroplane: we cannot tell precisely when or how we left the ground, but we are conscious that the earth is receding.

Mr. Barrie is far more of a poet than many who are writing poetry to-day. He is a poet in imagination, but he is also an unerring craftsman; we chuckle over every page, but the tears are not far behind the laughter; we know we are listening to sentiment, but we love it quite frankly in a blasé and disillusioned age. That is, we love it when it is administered by the tender and whimsical Barrie.

Many men of letters essayed the theater during the nineteenth century, Browning and Tennyson, Meredith and Henry James among them; but Barrie was the only one who found an enduring welcome there.

"He is easily the first to whom we apply the word 'genius,' if by that strange word we mean a man whose mental processes completely evade us," says S. P. B. Mais, "He has the gift, not only of making the sentimental palatable, but almost of making us believe that to be sentimental is a virtue. As a tear-monger, and a laughter-monger, better still, as a tear-and-laughter-monger, he stands absolutely alone."

In reading the plays the student should seek to detect and analyze the subtle Barrie-ism which many believe makes it possible to recognize a page taken at random from his writing: the combination of worldly wisdom and a childlike simplicity, the blended humor and pathos, the surprise of unexpected association of ideas, and the sudden flight of delicate fantasy.

Max Beerbohm says, "Barrie is a child who can express through an artistic medium the childishness that is in him." His child plays are far more than plays for children; they are glasses through which age may look upon childhood, and understand. *Peter Pan* is an achievement in the drama of

the imagination. An adventure which proved so popular and so successful quite naturally has had many imitators. It has become quite the fashion to dress up old tales as Barrie transformed the Cinderella tale. But there is only one magician who with a wave of his wand transports his audience to a desert island where there is romantic escape from the reality of social conventions, as in *The Admirable Crichton*, or to the woods on midsummer eve outside Mr. Lob's window, as in *Dear Brutus*.

Although standing quite alone as a creator of the drama of fantasy in the English movement, the contribution of Mr. Barrie to the drama of thought must not be overlooked. *What Every Woman Knows* and *The Twelve Pound Look* may be selected as examples. *The Admirable Crichton* apparently ends quite happily with all the lords and ladies restored to their rightful places and about to be satisfactorily married; but—does it end happily? Or is it the indeterminate ending of the modern drama of thought? The admirable Crichton is the hero, undoubtedly; he is restored to domestic service after he has demonstrated his ability to lead the group whom he serves. He remains with them long enough to bolster up their lies and save their pride and as the curtain falls announces that he is to leave service, that he has not lost his courage. What is to become of Crichton? With the courage of a leader and a memory—in England, with a record as “a perfect servant”—there is a conflict between character and environment worthy the pen of a dramatist; but Barrie leaves it with a shrug of his shoulders which says, “God knows!” Max Beerbohm calls *The Admirable Crichton* “the best thing that has happened in my time to the English stage.”

Lovers of literature will revel in all of Barrie's plays, but if it is necessary to make a selection, probably *What Every Woman Knows*, *The Admirable Crichton*, and *Dear Brutus* will be as representative of the different phases of his art as any three which might be chosen. *What Every Woman Knows* is especially interesting from its presentation of the

eternal feminine in Maggie Shand, the wife who deliberately bolsters up a weak husband with her strength and so effaces herself in the process that he is quite convinced that he is going on utterly alone, and with astonishing rapidity. Note the suspense in the sequel.

A Few "Barrie-isms"

From *Quality Street*:

There is a satisfaction about living in Quality Street which even religion cannot give.

If there were a sufficient number of geese to go around, no woman of sense would ever get a husband.

He has taken from me the one glory that is in a woman's life. Not a man's love—she can do without that—but her own dear, sweet love for him.

A woman—even an old maid—must keep her flag flying.

From *Alice-Sit-by-the-Fire*:

Real plays are always about a lady and two men; and alas, only one of them is her husband. That is Life, you know. It is called the odd, odd triangle.

From *The Admirable Crichton*:

I have sat out a dance with the evening star.

Make a list of similar whimsical fancies from the plays you read.

STUDY OF Dear Brutus

Any play of James Matthew Barrie's would resent being pinned down for analysis in the usual way. The best method of approach is an open and childlike mind, quite ready, even anxious, for one of his sudden excursions into the land of Might-Have-Been. One will wish to read and

reread the prefaces and stage-directions, chuckling over the cunning with which they suggest all sorts of impossible things quite casually. Mr. Barrie says that novels are much more coquettish things than plays, but he has succeeded with his novelist's skill in making his plays very coquettish. We are quite sure in the opening lines of the stage-directions in *Dear Brutus* that we are on the verge of a mystery: "Our object is to catch two chief characters unawares; they are Darkness and Light." We know that Mr. Lob's garden is not an ordinary garden, but one where things happen; for "the moonshine stealing about among the flowers, to give them their last instructions, has left a smile upon them, but it is a smile with a menace in it for the dwellers in darkness."

The theme of *Dear Brutus*, if we must have a theme, is found in the lines of Shakespeare which suggested the title:

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves that we are underlings.

A discontented group, gathered at a country-house for the week-end, fancy that they have made a wrong turning somewhere in their past and if able to change their present conditions would make good. They are given a second chance by the magic of their host, who sends them into an enchanted wood to find the tree of knowledge. There for an hour they live under the conditions they have regretted to lose. The philanderer finds himself married to his latest affinity; the ne'er-do-well finds his dream-daughter. Oh, this little dream-daughter! How Barrie tugs at the heart-strings in this scene! "She has as many freckles as the stars of heaven. She is as lovely as you think she is," he coolly remarks, and you think her very lovely and very pathetic as she says:

To be very gay, dearest dear, is so near to being very sad.

The thing which all found in the woods was perception—a moment's clear vision which enabled them to see that "in

essentials they had not altered a particle" with a second chance:

Fate is something outside ourselves. What really plays the dickens with us is something inside of us. Something that makes us go on doing the same fool things, however many chances we get.

It is really too bad of Mr. Barrie to shatter our convictions that we might have been very remarkable persons if we only had had a chance. We like the idea of laying the blame on fate when we take the wrong path "which makes all the difference" or miss the train with its aftermath of event. Read in this connection *If* by Lord Dunsany and the poem, *The Road Not Taken*, by Robert Frost.

Do not miss these delightful Barrie-isms:

Probably no one ever looked so old except some new-born child.

Every woman who pronounces her r as w will find a mate; it appeals to all that is chivalrous in man.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

What is there about Barrie's plays to suggest the art of the novelist?

Compare the stage-directions of Shaw and Barrie.

How does his individual style transform even the conventional theme?

Does he preserve the impartiality of Galsworthy in presentation?

Are his own sympathies evident in *What Every Woman Knows*?

Does Lady Sybil get a "square deal" from the dramatist?

Note that the characters who take themselves most seriously are often most humorous and the so-called comic ones most pathetic.

Discuss Barrie's "wit of situation" and select instances.

In the plays are we primarily interested in the plot, the

characterization, or the sudden transformations from comedy to pathos?

Select instances from the plays of humor resulting from the unexpected association of ideas.

What, would you say, is the relative place of Barrie in American favor? Discuss his interpretation of children.

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

Quality Street (1903).

The Admirable Crichton (1903).

Alice-Sit-by-the-Fire (1905).

What Every Woman Knows (1908).

Peter Pan.

Rosalind (1912), one-act play.

A Kiss for Cinderella (1916).

Dear Brutus (1922).

The Old Lady Shows Her Medals (play of the recent war).

The Twelve Pound Look, One-Act Plays.

Published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

THE INDEPENDENT THEATER MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND

The year 1891 witnessed two very significant events in the dramatic world; the passage of an International Copyright Act, protecting the printed play equally in America and England, and the opening of the Independent Theater with *Ghosts*, giving Ibsen directly to an English audience. With the protection of the Copyright Act, Jones and Pinero began to print, and Shaw found a larger audience through his printed plays than the stage could ever have afforded to him. With the opening of experimental theaters the new school of dramatists found encouragement to do pioneer work for their art. In 1891, also, a uniform edition of Ibsen's plays, edited by William Archer, appeared; and the Ibsen controversy was in full swing.

Increasing difficulties of production, caused by censorship

and sharp division of opinion, made new organization for playwrights necessary to further progress. Beerbohm Tree, as early as 1890, had set aside a part of his performances for experimental work before select audiences. It is amusing to note that the first afternoon performances were given because people were too sleepy and inert after dinner to enjoy the "intellectual drama." The Independent Theater ran for seven years, producing plays by Ibsen, Zola, Shaw, and others. It was succeeded by the Stage Society, which opened in 1900 with *You Never Can Tell*. Its object was to present new actors, new playwrights, and foreign plays. It was sustained by private membership. Other societies followed, notably the Elizabethan Stage Society for the revival of Elizabethan drama. In these societies Granville Barker was tutored for his later work as director and playwright.

In 1905 Mr. Barker became director of the Court Theater, where he produced in three years thirty-two plays, eleven of which were written by Bernard Shaw. At the Court Theater, also, were produced *The Silver Box*, *Prunella*, and Barker's own *Voysey Inheritance*. There Gilbert Murray's transcriptions from Greek tragedy first saw the stage. Under the patronage of Charles Frohman, Barker transferred his activity to the Duke of York Theater, in 1910, which lost heavily in its experiments. Miss Horniman established an excellent repertory theater in 1907 which has sent a company out on tour, but the problem of a national repertory theater for England is as yet unsolved.

Granville Barker: The Intellectual Drama

The debt of the English stage to Granville Barker is altogether out of proportion to the number of plays he has written. As actor and manager his time has been given very largely to the interpretation of the work of others rather than to creation. The few plays which he has written combine a great practical knowledge of the stage with a cleverness in breaking stage conventions. With Mr. Barker's

work the drama of ideas is carried to its culmination. Thomas H. Dickinson says: "The artistry of intellectualism will hardly go beyond Barker. He has sensitiveness, restraint, knowledge of the soul of the time, and remarkable mastery of design. His plays have that most difficult thing, idea vitalized with sensation. But he has refined this type to sterility."

The four plays of Granville Barker are interesting to any careful student of the drama, each in its own way. The first, *The Marrying of Ann Leete*, written when the dramatist was but twenty-two, is a study of family life where all personal development has been sacrificed to "getting on," with the result that they have not gotten on to an appreciable extent. The most significant thing about this early play is the experiment in dialogue. There are no expositions in stage-directions; there are no bracketed moods; the reader—if sufficiently "intellectual"—must build up from the scraps of disjointed conversation four different love-affairs, the intrigue of an unscrupulous politician, the precarious situation of a decadent family, and the revolt of the youngest daughter, who proceeds to found a new family in her own way. It is quite possible to discover all this for yourself in the play but the technique is a bit bewildering. The opening scene before dawn in the garden and the closing picture of the unborn children chattering at the cottage door are a justification for the permanence of the play.

The Voysey Inheritance is one of the two comedies of business that stand out in English drama; the other is *The Thunderbolt* by Pinero. Here again we have a study of a family group, with the "in-laws" most distinctly drawn. The difficulty of nice distinctions in modern business and of determining where honor ends and idealism begins is the theme.

Waste, the power of an hour's madness to wreck a life specialized to intellectual pursuits, is a prelude to *Madras House* with its discussion of abnormal sex conditions. Compare Amy O'Connell, of *Waste*, who shirks the responsibili-

ties of motherhood, to Miss Yates in *Madras House*. Note the indication of mood by bracketed suggestions.

STUDY OF Madras House

The theme is an arraignment of modern civilization in regard to sex and a satire on business methods. The position of women is examined in a series of episodes depicting the sheltered, economically dependent women, unfunctioning, as in the Huxtable sisters; the women in industry, economically independent, but prevented no less from the normal sex life; the models, who frankly live upon their sex attractions; and the products of civilization, such as Jessica. It is a naturalistic presentation of an intellectual problem.

Every great public question . . . all politics, all religion, all economy is being brought down to the level of women's emotion. Admirable in its way . . . but softening, sentimentalizing, enervating . . . lapping the world if you let it, in the nursery cotton wool of prettiness and pettiness. Men don't realize how far rotted they are in the process . . . that's what's so fatal.

Europe in its attitude toward women is mad.

What with the well-kept women you flatter and æstheticize till they won't give you children, and the free women you work at market rates till they can't give you children . . .

Constantine, the convert to Oriental ideals, states his protest in the passages just quoted, and Philip the hard-headed intellectual, questions:

What do we slow-breeding, civilized people get out of love . . . and the beauty of women . . . and the artistic setting that beauty demands? For which we do pay rather a big price—

In structure Mr. Barker discarded a good many theatrical conventions, and in this instance he discarded the plot. There is no plot to speak of in *Madras House*; it is a series of episodes, rather chaotic, but serving the purpose. Each act wanders off aimlessly into silence or stops abruptly in

the middle of the conversation. There is no finale; the author frankly disclaims any intention of solving anything by stating that the subject is endless. While *The Marrying of Ann Leete* had no exposition of character in stage-directions, *Madras House* has used this method very effectively. Note especially the Huxtables and the description of Jessica.

Of the characters, is Mr. Eustace Perrin State, the romantic promoter, a characterization of the American financier, or a caricature? Is the morality of Mr. Huxtable anything more than a veneer? Is he moral because he has not the courage to have his fling? Note his anxious question:

D' you think it's only not being very clever keeps us well behaved?

The characters of Philip and Jessica are shown in the following passages:

JESSICA: I frankly cultivate expensive tastes. I like to have beautiful things around me. I don't know what else civilization means.

PHILIP: If we can't love the bad as well as the beautiful . . . if we won't share it all out now . . . fresh air and art . . . and dirt and sin . . . then we good and clever people are costing the world too much. Our brains cost too much if we don't give them freely. Your beauty costs too much if I only admire it because of the uglier women I see . . . even your virtue may cost too much, my dear. Rags pay for finery and ugliness for beauty, and sin pays for virtue. . . .

Male and female created He them . . . and left us to do the rest. Men and women are a long time in the making . . . aren't they?"

For Philip there is a career of reform—"to save his soul"—but for Jessica, *what?* The author does not say, and the curtain falls.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Why are Mr. Barker's plays called plays of ideas?

What new technique is exemplified in these four plays?

Comment upon the use of stage-directions in *Madras House*.

What are the different views of motherhood expressed in *Waste* and *Madras House*?

Is Miss Yates a type which Shaw often used? Compare Houghton's Fanny in *Hindle Wakes*.

Contrast the dialogue in *Madras House* with that of *The Marrying of Ann Leete*.

Which was the more abnormal, Miss Yates or Julia Huxtable?

What was Constantine's arraignment of civilization?

Is the modern world sex-mad? Comment upon current fiction.

Note the departures from dramatic convention in *Madras House*.

How many of these would you say are successful?

Arrange the characters according to relationships, and study them as a group.

Is character developed in *Madras House* by self-explanation, dialogue, or stage-direction?

Is the dialogue of *The Marrying of Ann Leete* naturalistic or concentrated for dramatic purpose?

LIST OF PLAYS

The Plays of Granville Barker (Little, Brown & Co.).

The Marrying of Ann Leete (1901).

The Voysey Inheritance (1905).

Waste (1907).

The Madras House (1910), *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

The Secret Life (1923) (Little, Brown & Co.).

A FEW CONTEMPORARY PLAYS

Of the half-dozen major dramatists of the English Renaissance, two belong, by the character of their best work, to the nineteenth century. Jones and Pinero are not of the "new theater," although they have produced plays within the past decade. Barrie is still holding his own; Shaw has ap-

proached the vigor of his early work; and Galsworthy is not adding to his laurels. Lovers of the drama are looking anxiously for their successors among contemporary writers. Arnold Bennett raised his head from his novels long enough to produce one international success in *Milestones*, and John Drinkwater left the making of songs to depict an American hero, *Abraham Lincoln*. Israel Zangwill is another example of distinction in a single play, *The Melting Pot*. The popular and well-known plays, *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*, by Jerome K. Jerome, and *The Servant in the House* by Charles Rann Kennedy, are remarkable for their religious feeling and symbolism rather than for dramatic importance.

Among the "popular successes" of the past few years are several plays by A. A. Milne and Somerset Maugham, but this brings us to the point where we cannot see the "forest for the trees." Not until we look backward upon it will the contemporary growth assume its proper relation to the whole. As an illustration of the futility of contemporary judgment one may take the study of *English Dramatists of To-day*, written by that eminent critic, Mr. William Archer, in 1882. There are but two of the eighteen writers whom he discusses who would be mentioned in a study of the English drama as a whole to-day, Jones and Pinero. One of the most successful attempts to revive the spirit of ancient tragedy in modern circumstances, is the sordid naturalistic story of *Nan* by the English poet, John Masefield. "Tragedy at its best is a vision of the heart of life," says Mr. Masefield. "The heart of life can only be laid bare in the agony and exultation of dreadful acts. The vision of the agony, or spiritual contest, pushed beyond the limits of the dying personality, is exalting and cleansing. It is only by such vision that a multitude can be brought to the passionate knowledge of things exulting and eternal." It is just this spiritual contact with the universal and eternal which most of our modern drama somehow misses, and, missing that, becomes an unhappy story of a special case but fails of true tragedy. The poetic beauty and the majesty of suf-

fering in the story of *Nan* lifts the ugly theme from the commonplace into the universal. This play was produced under the direction of Mr. Granville Barker at the New Royalty Theater in 1908.

It is interesting to record for the first time in this long study of the drama the name of a woman writer. While women had been producing poetry and fiction ranking among the best of the Victorian Age, distinction for them in the drama is of very recent date. Miss Githa Sowerby has written in *Rutherford and Son* a striking drama of the sacrifice of a family to the Moloch of business, and Elizabeth Baker's plays of suburban and business life of London are highly praised; the best of these is *Chains*.

Outward Bound by Sutton Vane is an unusual play which has attracted wide attention.

REVIVAL OF THE POETIC DRAMA: STEPHEN PHILLIPS,
ALFRED NOYES, GORDON BOTTOMLEY, CLEMENCE DANE

The poetic revival in the English drama was led by Stephen Phillips, whose *Paolo and Francesca* appeared in 1902 and is usually considered his best work. It was followed by *Herod*, *Ulysses*, *The Sin of David*, *Nero*, and *Pietro of Siena*. His work was loudly acclaimed, and he suffered the reaction from overpraise during his lifetime. His plays will probably not be acted again, but they will be read for the beauty of the lines. The *Paolo and Francesca* of Phillips should be compared with the treatment of the same theme by D'Annunzio, and Dante's reference to the ill-fated lovers recalled. The character of Lucrezia, widowed and childless, and the irony of her love for Francesca too late to save her, is the most original part of the play. The surrender of the unwilling Paolo and Francesca to their fated love is a memorable passage:

PAOLO: Thou wast the lovely quest of Arthur's knights.

FRANCESCA: Thy armor glimmered in a gloom of green.

PAOLO: Did I not sing to thee in Babylon?

FRANCESCA: Or did we set a sail in Carthage Bay?

PAOLO: Were thine eyes strange?

FRANCESCA: Did I not know thy voice?
 All ghostly grew the sun, unreal the air
 Then when we kissed:

PAOLO: And in that kiss our souls
 Together flashed, and now they are one flame,
 Which nothing can put out, nothing divide.
 Why did you shiver and turn sudden cold?

FRANCESCA: I felt a wind pass over me.
 . . . Ah, Paolo! if we
 Should die to-night, then whither would our souls
 Repair?

PAOLO: What can we fear, we two?
 O God, Thou seest us thy creatures bound
 Together by that law which holds the stars
 In palpitating cosmic passion bright;
 By which the very sun enthralls the earth,
 And all the waves of the world faint to the moon.
 Even by such attraction we two rush
 Together through the everlasting years.

The restraint of the closing scene, with the murder off the stage and the quiet kiss of Giovanni is a most fitting finale for the characters as Mr. Phillips drew them:

I did not know the dead could have such hair.
 Hide them. They look like children fast asleep.

In *Sherwood*, Alfred Noyes has retold the Robin Hood legend and created a very lovable fool in Shadow-of-a-Leaf, who renounces fairy-land when he opens its gates for Robin Hood and Maid Marian.

We fairies have not known or heard
 What waits for those, who like this wandering fool,
 Throw all away for love. But I have heard
 There is a great King, out beyond the world,
 Not Richard, who is dead, nor yet King John,
 But a great King who one day will come home
 Clothed with the clouds of heaven from His Crusade.

Sherwood was given a successful production at the University of California.

The poetic plays of Gordon Bottomley are rich in imagination and in beauty of lines, and are actable. Especially recommended for reading are *King Lear's Wife*, with its new twist to the old story, and *The Crier by Night*. The theme of the latter is not unlike that of *Nan*, with its helpless misery and its terror of the rising waters. Gordon Bottomley's plays have many haunting bits; as these from *The Crier by Night*:

Things need not happen that they may be true;
 Although impossible, they may be true—
 The things that happen matter in the heart.
 All earthly truth is true but for a time,
 Whilst ages may be altered by one dream—
 The things that matter happen in the heart.

O, I am but a troubled dream of God's,
 And even His will can alter not His dreams;
 I must be dreamed out to the hardest end,
 Returning then to be unknown in Him;
 I shall be Him again when He awakes,
 Ah, God awake, and so forget me soon!

One of the latest poetic plays to win distinction is *Will Shakespeare* by Clemence Dane (Winifred Ashton), whose *Bill of Divorcement* had already attracted attention to her as a writer of promise. This play was produced in New York in 1923. Its historic interest and the beauty of its lines commend it to the reader.

LIST OF SELECTED CONTEMPORARY PLAYS

Milestones, Arnold Bennett and Edward Knoblock, *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. II.

The Melting-Pot, Israel Zangwill (Macmillan Co.).

Abraham Lincoln, John Drinkwater, *Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. II.

The Passing of the Third Floor Back, Jerome K. Jerome (Dodd, Mead & Co.).

The Servant in the House, Charles Rann Kennedy (Harper & Brothers).

Mr. Pim Passes By, A. A. Milne (G. P. Putnam's Sons).

Our Betters, Somerset Maugham, *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. II.

The Tragedy of Nan, John Masefield (Macmillan Co.).

Rutherford and Son, Githa Sowerby (Samuel French).

Chains, Elizabeth Baker (Luce).

Sherwood, Alfred Noyes (Frederick A. Stokes Co.).

King Lear's Wife, Gordon Bottomley (1915) (Small, Maynard & Co.).

The Crier by Night, Gordon Bottomley (1920) (Small, Maynard & Co.).

Will Shakespeare, Clemence Dane (1922) (Macmillan Co.).

Paolo and Francesca, Stephen Phillips (Dodd, Mead, & Co.).

Outward Bound, Sutton Vane (1924) (Boni & Liveright).

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE

Briefly, then, the movement of the modern drama in England, led by Jones, Pinero, and Wilde, and influenced by the Scandinavian Theater of Ideas, discarded the artificial play with its dramatic conveniences, types, and coincidences, its sub-plots and comic relief, for the drama of sincerity with its crises of life exemplifying human problems. It passed from the artificial intrigue of Wilde to the social satire of Shaw, from the drama of emotion of Pinero to the drama of thought in Galsworthy, from the diffuseness of Jones to the concentration of Barker, all within the brief space of a single generation. Through its experimental theaters it has been building up an appreciation of the serious drama as opposed to the more popular farces, melodramas, and musical comedies offered by the commercial theaters. In melodrama the story develops by pressure of external incident; in the new theater action develops from within, from the clash of the characters involved. In melodrama the forces are lined up

very definitely, all the good on one side and all the bad on the other, and the characters are types, hero and villain, ingénue and adventuress: in the modern drama there is often no hero and seldom a villain, and the good and the bad are mixed as in life. In melodrama the play ends with the triumph of the good and the death of the villain; in a contemporary play death is not a solution, and the dramatist very often leaves the ending indeterminate. In serious drama of to-day the characters are bound to some inevitable course through the consequence of previous action: if the resulting catastrophe is great enough and universal enough to establish a contact with the eternal order of things, then it becomes a tragedy; if the story, no matter how tragic, is one not likely to be of universal application, it is a special case, an unhappy play but not true tragedy. The English drama, in Barrie, added to the literature of fantasy, which is simply the poetic imagination playing upon the existing forms of comedy.

Maeterlinck says: "The first thing that strikes us in the drama of to-day is the decay, one might say the creeping paralysis, of external action. Next we note a very pronounced desire to penetrate deeper and deeper into human consciousness, and place moral problems upon a high pedestal; and finally the search, very timid and halting, for a new kind of beauty, that shall be less abstract than was the old."

This same movement of the modern has been going on in other countries while we have been examining that of England as if it were an isolated event, but it may be traced most typically in England. Whether the contemporary successes are but the echoes of an impulse that has passed or the faint stirring of one yet unborn, who shall say? This *drama* of the *drama* which we are seeking to visualize must of necessity give us an indeterminate ending. Since the outbreak of the World War, English Drama has been waiting for the curtain to rise upon the next act.

REFERENCE WORKS FOR DETAILED STUDY OF THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE

The Contemporary Drama of England, Thomas H. Dickinson (Little, Brown & Co.).

Chief Contemporary Dramatists, Thomas H. Dickinson (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Dramatic Portraits, P. P. Howe (Mitchell Kennerley) (Containing Jones, Pinero, Wilde, Shaw, Galsworthy, Barrie, and Barker).

Iconoclasts, James Huneker (Charles Scribner's Sons) (Contains *The Quintessence of Shaw*).

Bernard Shaw, the Man, and the Mask, Richard Burton (Henry Holt & Co.).

Foundations of a National Drama, Henry Arthur Jones (Macmillan Co.).

Dramatic Opinions and Essays, George Bernard Shaw (Brentano's).

Dramatists of To-day, Edward Everett Hale, Jr. (Henry Holt & Co.) (Containing Pinero, Shaw, and Phillips).

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The Revival of the Poetic Drama, Brander Matthews, *Atlantic Monthly*, February, 1908.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OF THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE

Review the first great national impulse and conditions preceding the new birth.

Discuss the transition links between the mediocrity of the nineteenth century and the vigor of the early part of the twentieth.

The mission of Mr. Henry Arthur Jones in "keeping the theater open."

The women of Pinero.

The conversation of Oscar Wilde; the inconsequent conversation.

The decline of the double standard.

The impertinence of Bernard Shaw.

The seriousness of Galsworthy.

The whimsicality of Sir J. M. Barrie.

Discuss the contrariety of critical opinion concerning the work of Barrie.

The Independent Theater and its service to dramatic art.
Contemporary English plays.

Discuss the modern indeterminate ending and the passing of the idea that death is ever a solution of problems presented.

Sum up in three hundred words the accomplishment of the English Renaissance.

II

THE NEW THEATER OF IRELAND

In a good play every speech should be as fully flavored as a nut or an apple, and such speeches cannot be written by anyone who works among people who have shut their lips on poetry. In Ireland, we have a popular imagination that is fiery and magnificent, and tender; so that those of us who wish to write start with a chance not given to writers where the springtime of the local life has been forgotten, and the harvest is a memory only, and the straw has been turned into bricks.

—Preface to *Playboy of the Western World*, Synge

THE ABBEY THEATER

To a greater degree than in any other country, not even excepting Russia, is the story of the rebirth of the drama inseparably linked to the name of a theater. The leader in the movement for an Art Theater in Dublin was William Butler Yeats. His idea was to afford a stage for the presentation of literary plays with a popular appeal but not constrained by the commercial traditions. With the coöperation of Lady Gregory and Edward Martyn the organization known as the Irish Literary Theater was formed. Mr. George Moore soon joined them, bringing his valuable knowledge of the stage. This was in the lull of 1899. *The Countess Cathleen* by Yeats was the first production, and Martyn's *Heather Field* was given in the same season. An experiment with a few plays annually for three years was planned. At the close of these three pioneer years the name was changed to the Irish National Dramatic Company, and in 1903 to the Irish National Theater Society. A fortunate London performance brought the heroic group to the attention of that friend and benefactor of the theater, Miss A. E. F. Horni-

man. She purchased the Abbey Theater in Dublin, reconstructed it, and endowed the company for six years.

The Abbey Theater has been able to maintain itself since the patronage of Miss Horniman came to an end and has extended its influence. For a list of the plays produced by this theater the reader is referred to the appendix of *Our Irish Theater* by Lady Gregory. In her story of the movement this remarkable woman has presented very vividly the ideals and the struggles of the little group who led the Celtic Renaissance.

Professor Cornelius Weygandt, in his *Irish Plays and Playwrights*, says: "I think the dramatic movement the most significant part of the Celtic Renaissance, a movement to me the most original movement in letters the world has known since that movement in Norway which so definitely stimulated it, a movement that gave Björnson and Ibsen to the world."

Yeats: The Drama of Twilight Moods

William Butler Yeats (b. 1865, achieved an international reputation as a lyric poet before he turned, at the age of thirty-four, to the drama. He is still primarily a poet, a singer of "old, unhappy, far-off things," and his sad, mystical lines linger in the memory when dramatic situation is forgotten. Mr. Yeats says of his ideas of art, "I would like to see a poetical drama which tries to keep at a distance from daily life that it may keep its emotions untroubled, staged with but two or three colors." And this idea he seems to have achieved in his own work. His plays are symphonies in green and gray and silver, played in the twilight hour in a lonely place. It is frankly a land of dreams to which he summons us, but he tells us the adventure shall not be vain:

All would be well
Could we but give us wholly unto dreams,
And get into their world that to the sense
Is shadow, and not linger wretchedly
Among substantial things.

Since 1900, Mr. Yeats has given almost his entire time to the theater. He is represented not by his plays alone, but by much critical comment, and in his influence over his associates. The Abbey Theater could scarcely have become the power it is in the Irish national life without the poetic temperament and the spiritual insight of William Butler Yeats.

The Countess Cathleen, the first play produced by the Abbey Theater, remains one of the best. Its beauty is in its atmosphere, its magic of words, and its symbolism, suggesting things of the spirit that transcend the commonplace. Its allegory is not difficult to interpret. Countess Cathleen sells her soul to save her starving tenants, but is saved in the end.

The light beats down: the gates of pearl are wide,
And she is passing to the floor of peace . . .

The Light of Lights

Looks always on the motive, not the deed.

Into the mouth of old Oona, the foster-mother, are put some of the most memorable lines. She sits dreaming by her spinning-wheel, unheeding the tales of famine:

I have known three things no doctor cures—
Love, loneliness, and famine; nor found refuge
Other than growing old and full of sleep.

Again, when she holds the mirror to the lips of the dead Cathleen, while she, the aged one, is left alone, she mutters:

The years like great black oxen tread the world,
And God the herdsman goads them on behind,
And I am broken by their passing feet.

The Shadowy Waters was staged in 1904 with a becoming weirdness. Green and blue and copper were the only colors permitted in the settings. The meeting of the hero, Forgael, with his love, Dectora, in northern seas and their will to be left alone on the viking ship at the world's end is the romantic theme. To this theme the author returned again and again with loving touch. He says in his introductory poem:

The images I have woven in this story
Of Forgael and Dectora and the empty waters
Moved round me in the voices and the fires.
How shall I name you, immortal, mild, proud shadows?
I only know that all we know comes from you,
And that you come from Eden on flying feet.

Compare the mystic longing for far-off things in this play with *The Princess Maleine* of Maeterlinck and *The Princess Far-Away* of Rostand.

The story of Deirdre, a legend dear to the Irish people, has attracted Mr. Yeats as it has most of his contemporaries. The dramatist has concentrated the story of the sorrows into one event, the crisis. As acted by Mrs. Patrick Campbell it has been most successful upon the stage. *Cathleen ni Houlihan* is an allegory of Ireland, both poetic and dramatic. *The Hour Glass* is a one-act morality. A wise man, a scholar, who has upset the faith of many by his teaching, finds in the hour of death salvation through the faith of a child, a fool. It is a conflict between reason and intuition. As an example of the best of Mr. Yeats's work, with its mysticism, its twilight moods, and its formless yearning, *The Land of Heart's Desire* is recommended.

STUDY OF *The Land of Heart's Desire*

This play is in one act, and was played in America by Miss Margaret Wycherley in 1904. It is a favorite with amateur dramatic clubs, and was first produced in America in 1901.

The theme is the quest of the ideal; the longing for beauty, freedom, and enduring youth in the soul of Maire Bruin. The conflict is between the priest, representing orthodox religion, and the powers of faery. One offers peace and homely content:

To sit beside the board and drink good wine
And watch the turf smoke coiling from the fire
And feel content and wisdom in your heart,
This is the best of life.

The other lures unto the land of faery:

Where nobody grows old and godly and grave,
Where nobody gets old and crafty and wise,
Where nobody gets old and bitter of tongue.

Maire chafes at "the little round of days and deeds" and finds small comfort in the priest's statement that "life moves out of a red flare of dreams into a common light of common hours."

As for structure, Mr. Yeats has made a symbolical drama of great beauty out of this old folk-tale. Note the use of the popular superstitions in regard to midsummer eve and the fairies, whom the peasants called "the good people" to conciliate them. The haunting effect of the fairy-song repeated at the close is one of the most beautiful touches of the play. Observe that the foreboding in the first part of the play leads up to the tragic close and makes it seem quite inevitable. Dramatic preparation for the event has taken away its improbability.

Of characters, we have the old father, with a "tongue too crafty and wise," the priest with "a tongue too godly and grave," the old mother with a "tongue more bitter than the tide," and the young husband with a "tongue too full of drowsy love"—how this one speech shows us the little circle. We see Maire in their midst, fragile, dreamy, unsuited to household tasks, lonely of heart, longing for the land of the beyond of which the winds whisper.

The wind blows out of the gates of day,
The wind blows over the lonely heart,
And the lonely heart is withered away.

Interpretation should not be pressed too closely. Let it suffice that a beautiful thing has passed us by. It does not add to our pleasure to pin down the allegory and say that so the sensitive and idealistic soul pines away and dies in the midst of practical environment—"the lonely heart is withered away." The dramas of Mr. Yeats are dramas of

romantic escape, and, like children, we follow into the land of illusion, the land of eternal youth and beauty.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

What superstitions does the author use in this play?

Discuss the dramatic effect of the hidden crucifix.

Are the characters sharply defined?

Is the play romantic, symbolic, or realistic?

What is the significance of the calling, "white bird"?

Comment upon the Irish dread and fear of the fairy people.

Compare this with the English fairy-lore. With the German.

How does the author do away with the sense of improbability?

Why does the ending seem inevitable?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

The Land of Heart's Desire (1894).

The Countess Cathleen (1899).

Cathleen ni Houlihan (1902).

The King's Threshold, a defense of art (1903).

The Hour Glass (1903).

Shadowy Waters (1904).

Deirdre (1906).

Published by the Macmillan Co., New York.

The Hour Glass is in *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Lady Isabel Augusta Gregory: Folk-History Plays

Lady Gregory, whose human qualities have so endeared her to her own country and wherever she has carried the story of the Irish National Theater abroad, would probably never have turned to the drama if plays had not been needed for the Abbey Theater—plays of the sort she was especially

qualified to furnish. The mysticism of Yeats and the satire of Synge needed just the leaven of kindly good humor which her little farces afforded. There was no bitterness in her laughter, and no playwright is so deeply beloved by the people.

She had long been interested in collecting and preserving the folk-stories of Ireland and knows Ireland and its customs thoroughly. She is at her best in the merry and whimsical little plays, but often there is a serious motive under the surface. Some of the comedies go back to historic days in their setting, such as *The Canavans*, *Kincora* and *The Gaol Gate*; and in at least one, *The Travelling Man*, there is a mystic meaning. It is a modern miracle-play.

MacDaragh's Wife, written on board the ship on which Lady Gregory was bound for America, has a serious theme, and *Grania* is a tragedy; but it is in the merry farces of peasant life with their rollicking fun and spirited dialogue that she is best known and admired. There are comedies of character and comedies of situation. Lady Gregory says in her story of the Irish Theater, "Perhaps I should have written nothing but these short comedies, but desire for experiment is like fire in the blood." The student is recommended especially to careful consideration of the plays in the volume entitled *Seven Short Plays*. It includes the popular *Workhouse Ward*, *The Travelling Man*, and *The Gaol Gate*—three of the most representative plays exemplifying various phases of her work. Since the themes and treatment of these little plays are so obvious, no special study will be given. Group-reading of *The Workhouse Ward* is suggested.

Special consideration of Lady Gregory as a patron of Irish letters is important, as well as knowledge of her as a playwright. The story of her years of devotion to the upbuilding of a theater which should express a national consciousness is told in *Our Irish Theater*. She laughingly remarked in her American lectures that she was advised to stay by her hearth and "grow a soul" in her old age; and then with a

twinkle she added that perhaps in growing a national theater she was all unconsciously saving her own soul.

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

Seven Short Plays (published by G. P. Putnam's Sons).

Spreading the News.

Hyacinth Halvey.

The Gaol Gate.

The Rising of the Moon (also in *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I).

The Jackdaw.

The Travelling Man.

The Workhouse Ward.

Synge: The Drama of Contemporary Peasant Life

John Millington Synge (1871–1909) is the third in the distinguished Irish group in point of appearance, and first from the standpoint of his dramatic ability. This ability was not discovered until after a meeting with W. B. Yeats in 1898. Yeats advised the young man, who was drifting about, studying music and attempting literary criticism, to go to the Aran Islands and make a study of the primitive conditions there. This Synge did and amassed the material from which he drew richly later. In 1903 the Abbey Theater produced *The Shadow of the Glen* and in the next year *Riders to the Sea*. *The Tinker's Wedding* was written but not produced. In 1905, *The Well of the Saints* came to the stage, and two years later the famous, or infamous, riot over *The Playboy of the Western World* occurred. The audience took this as a travesty upon Irish character, and after the first ten minutes no one was permitted to hear a word. This kept up for a week. The players, determined to make a stand once for all against the censorship of the mob, refused to remove the play and spoke their lines in spite of deafening uproar and hisses. When the Irish Players came to America in 1911,

Harvard and Yale insisted upon *The Playboy of the Western World*. There was some sensational criticism inspired by fanatical clans, but, Lady Gregory remarks, "The civic genius of America decided that not we but our opponents had broken the public peace."

Mr. Synge sets forth his ideas in the introductions of his plays. He does not approve didactic or thesis plays, declaring that only in its infancy and decay does the drama tend to become didactic. Neither does he approve of the romantic escape from life which Yeats employs. He depicts life with all its irony of situation without particular purpose and with no illusions. In his power of mingled pathos and humor and in his mastery of prose he goes far beyond his contemporaries.

In his own inimitable manner, W. B. Yeats sums up the characteristics of his friend and associate in *Synge and the Ireland of His Time*:

He loves all that has edge, all that is salt in the mouth, all that is rough to the hand, all that heightens the emotions by contest, all that stings into life the sense of tragedy . . .

The food of the spiritual-minded is sweet, an Indian scripture says, but passionate minds love bitter food.

His last years were spent in incurable illness and anguish; he was cut off at thirty-eight years from the life he had found so bitter and so sweet and the words of Deirdre might have fallen from his own lips:

It should be a sweet thing to have what is richest and best, if it's for a short space only.

This retelling of the Irish folk-tale of the love and sorrow of Deirdre was written in the dramatist's dying hours, with sure knowledge of the shortness of his days. *Deirdre of the Sorrows* was produced at the Abbey Theater in 1910. The seven years of happiness which Deirdre knew may be likened to the author's own seven years of activity, in which he created six dramas that stand high, not only in his own

country, but in the literature of the world. Her doom may be likened to his own untimely death. The play is written in an exaltation of spirit which makes it surpass his other work. "Exaltation" is one of the words which characterizes the work of Synge; the other two are "irony" and "extravagance." Joy there is, too, welling up in the most unexpected places. It rings in the triumphant speech of Deirdre about to die by her own hand:

I have put sorrow away like an old shoe that is worn out and muddy, for it is I have had a life that will be envied by great companies. It was not by a low birth I made kings uneasy, and they sitting in the halls of Emain. It was not a low thing to be chosen by Conchubor, who was wise, and Naisi who had no match for bravery. It is not a small thing to be rid of grey hairs, and the loosening of the teeth. It was the choice of lives we had in the clear woods, and in the grave we're safe surely . . .

The student is recommended to study the treatment of the Deirdre legend in Yeats, Æ (George Russell), Synge, and Fiona McLeod and compare them. For the purpose of group reading and discussion, *Riders to the Sea* is suggested.

STUDY OF The Riders to the Sea

A tragedy in one act, first performed by the Irish Players in Dublin, 1904; given by the Irish Players in England and America.

Some critics have seen in this play the defeat of man in his conflict with the forces of nature. Is it not rather the peace that comes to a tortured soul that has given its all?

They're all gone now, and here isn't anything more the sea can do to me . . . I'll have no call now to be up crying and praying when the wind breaks from the south . . . and I won't care what way the sea is when the other women will be keening . . . It's a great rest I'll have now, and it's time surely . . .

In this tragedy of an Aran peasant woman, Synge has pictured a truth as universal as life. The relentless war with

the sea, bringing its inevitable fatality, has all the majesty and profound sorrow of a dirge.

The telling of the whole series of catastrophes is concentrated into the limit of one act. The action moves swiftly to its climax, which is the drowning of the sixth and last son. The realism of the cottage interior blends with the supernatural element of the mother's premonitory visions and the death-wail of the keening women. The apparently irrelevant words and actions which are portents of the coming death are skilfully handled, imparting an atmosphere of Greek fatality. The dialogue is simple and reveals the necessary facts with the utmost economy.

The mother, Maurya, type of the women who watch and pray for the men at sea, with her uncanny sentience of coming events, and her apathy of despair, is of course most vividly drawn; but the sisters, Nora and Cathleen, are very real and awaken interest and emotion in their pitiful efforts to shield the old mother from the knowledge of her added sorrow.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

How does the author hint of the approaching death of Bartley?

Are we sure when he leaves the cottage that he is going to death?

Is it a special case or a universal tragedy?

Is it a play of one character at a crisis?

In spite of its lack of conflict, would you call this a true tragedy?

Of what is the relentless sea the symbol?

Is Maurya's peace when she has nothing more to fear true to human life?

Does sleep come to tired watchers after the end when they no longer suffer uncertainty?

Is it resignation to the will of God or apathy of a soul that no longer reacts to emotion?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

In the Shadow of the Glen (one act) (1903).

Riders to the Sea (one act) (1904).

The Well of the Saints (1905).

The Playboy of the Western World (1907).

The Tinker's Wedding (1909).

Deirdre of the Sorrows (1909).

(Published by Luce.)

*Other Playwrights Connected with the Early History of
the Irish Theater: Æ, Padraic Colum*

George Russell (Æ), mystic, artist, man of letters, is best known for his poems, which are of a high spiritual order; but he was very helpful to the Irish Players, painting scenery, designing costumes, and once writing a play to order for their spring festival. This was his story of Deirdre which was written in three days at the request of the manager. Padraic Colum's work appeared at the same time as Synge's, although the former is usually classed with the younger generation. His human themes, drawn from the heart of the Irish Midlands, are dramas of situation rather than ordered plots. The two dramas of Fiona MacLeod (William Sharp) were never produced by the Irish Players, but are well worth knowing for their wild and mystic beauty. They are *The House of Usna*, embodying the Deirdre legend, and *The Immortal Hour*.

THE YOUNGER GENERATION: DUNSANY, ERVINE, ROBINSON

The distinction between good and bad artists becomes a question whether the artist has given of a superabundant vitality to re-create life, or whether he has merely taken the facts of life to manufacture his work. The first is a sign of strength, the latter a sign of weakness.

—*Modern Drama in Europe*, Storm Jameson

Lord Dunsany: The Drama of Wonder

Edward, Lord Dunsany, was born in 1878. He achieved a reputation as a story-writer and the creator of a new mythology before he attempted the drama. He is a well-known sportsman and served in the Boer War as well as the World War. The credit of introducing Dunsany as a dramatist is due to the Abbey Theater, where his *Glittering Gate* was given in 1909. This curtain-raiser—a mere dialogue of two dead burglars at the gate of heaven, revealing their metaphysical speculation—was given immediate recognition by W. B. Yeats. In 1914 this little play was published with four others under the title *Five Plays: The Gods of the Mountain*, and remains one of the best things the dramatist has done. *The Golden Doom* and *King Argimenes and the Unknown Warrior* sustained his reputation. *The Lost Silk Hat* is not important.

Under the title *Plays of Gods and Men*, published in 1917, appear *The Tents of the Arabs* and *A Night at an Inn*. The latter was first produced at the Neighborhood Playhouse, New York. Two other titles of less interest complete the volume.

If, a four-act play, which appeared in 1922, tells in Lord Dunsany's rich fancy what might have happened if a certain man who missed his train one morning had made it. It is reminiscent of Barrie's *Dear Brutus*.

Plays of the Near and Far, another collection of short plays, came out in 1923.

With Lord Dunsany the reader enters the realm of uncontrolled romance and, to enjoy him to the utmost, must surrender wholly to his magic, putting aside every preconceived opinion of plays and play-writing and reveling in the sheer joy of the tale. Those who are able to do this become his enthusiastic admirers and echo William Beebe: "I am tremendously fond of Lord Dunsany and his work, and I am sorry for you if you are not!" It is a sort of Celtic Arabian Nights to which he admits us, a land that never was and

never will be, yet which he succeeds in making very real. He gains his quality of remoteness by refusing to assign time and place to his themes. Even the names of his characters are elusive—Slith and Slippy and Slag. "He is a man with imagination as elfish as moonlight mist," says Edwin Björkman in the introduction to the *Five Plays*, but behind his imagination is a keen observation of life which makes his pictures convincing. All this is not a mere riot of fancy without form or substance: it is embodied in perfection of form; the dialogue is sharp and simple; there are touches of stark realism, as in *King Argimenes and the Unknown Warrior*; and there is a symbolism so deep that one hesitates to seek an interpretation, as in *The Compromise of the King of the Golden Isles*. "Dunsany is the only worthy successor to Yeats in the Irish Theater to-day," says Ernest A. Boyd in *Contemporary Literature of Ireland*. While he does not deal primarily with Irish legendary or contemporary life, he has clothed his fancies in the rich Celtic imagination.

In nearly all of the plays Time, the archvillain and destroyer, is in conflict with men and their self-imposed gods. The futility of the struggle and the credulity of men are treated with keen humor and irony.

The earliest influence which Lord Dunsany acknowledges is that of Grimm and Andersen; then he came under the spell of the Greek mythology; but no other book has so shaped his literary style as the Bible. He had published five volumes of fairy-tales, essays, and prose poems before turning to the drama.

In *Plays of the Near and Far*, published in 1923, the first, *The King of the Golden Isles*, is most significant. The author says it is just the sort of a play through which those that hunt for allegories might hunt merrily, and adds that there are no allegories in his plays.

STUDY OF *King Argimenes and the Unknown Warrior*

In two acts; first produced by the Abbey Theater in 1911. The first production in America was by Stuart Walker in

his Portmanteau Theater; it has been put on by little theaters of England and America.

The theme is a naturalistic study of the mutability of human affairs and the impotence and indifference of the gods in whom men set their hopes. Gods and men fall before the restless spirit of change. The same theme, irony of circumstance and of fate, is evident in one of the late series, *The Compromise of the King of the Golden Isles*.

Note the extreme naturalism of the depiction of the slaves, eating raw cabbage-leaves and gnawing bones. Only one of them, the old King Argimenes, has a memory worth cherishing; none of them has a hope beyond the possession of the bones of the king's dog when it shall die. They are not permitted to pray lest it awaken hope. The tear-song, the chant of the low-born, is the thread upon which the action is strung. It fills the first act and is the first note in the opening of the second. Compare with the beating of the tom-tom in *The Emperor Jones*. Observe that the whole story of the oppression of the miserable slaves is told in the careless speech of one of the queens:

THE KING'S OVERSEER: Work is slow, Majesty, at this season of the year because the green stuff is scarce and the slaves grow idle. They even grow insolent and ask for bones.

QUEEN CAHAFRA: Then why are they not flogged? It is so simple, they only have to flog them!

Note the dignity which is restored to Argimenes with the possession of a sword, the symbol of courage and strength. His whole past history is revealed in this first act. There is a reminder of the Greek treatment of tragedy in the revelation of the overcoming of the guards in the long-drawn "Oh!" of the watching slaves, and irony in the treatment of the prophet when the audience knows what has happened. He says:

My mind is dark with trouble for thy kingdom,

And the queen remarks:

I do not like the way he does his hair.

The fall of the god is really the climax of the play; after that the rest follows quite simply. With crafty wisdom Argimenes destroys the idol into which they have built their hopes and illusions; the rest is easy. Note that the tear-song, which has been continuous throughout the play, only ceases when the slaves hear that the idol has fallen; it is drowned for a time by the chant of the nobles, but is there, monotonous, menacing. The supreme irony of the death, in the moment of triumph, of the king's dog, which at the opening of the play was their sole hope, is apparent.

Although the events take place in a mythical kingdom, the treatment of the characters is naturalistic, not romantic. Human pride, human folly, and human misery in their universal garb pass by. Note the difference in the portrayal of Zarb and Argimenes. Even the king's dog, a big, black, friendly fellow, makes us long to pat his head.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

What is the significance of the tear-song, the chant of the low-born?

Is the attitude of the miserable slaves probable?

Where is the climax of suspense in the play?

Discuss the economy with which the past and present are set forth in Act One.

Is the attitude of the queens toward the prophet typical of human life?

Is the supreme irony of the play the building of the temple on the slave-field or the death of the king's dog?

Is it true that the destruction of men's illusions makes them easy prey?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

Five Plays: The Gods of the Mountain.
(1914) *The Golden Doom*

King Argimenes and the Unknown Warrior
(*Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. II).

The Glittering Gate.

The Lost Silk Hat.

Plays of Gods and Men (1917).

If, in four acts (1922).

Plays of the Near and Far (1923).

Published by G. P. Putnam's Sons.

St. John Ervine: The Drama of Character

St. John Greir Ervine (b. 1883), save for his connection with the Abbey Theater beginning in 1915, is scarcely a part of the Irish literary movement. Like Wilde and Shaw, who belong to Ireland by the accident of birth but to England in their literary activity, Mr. Ervine is better known and more highly praised abroad than in his own country. He has written six plays and four novels. The three plays which are best known are *Mixed Marriage*, *Jane Clegg*, and *John Ferguson*.

Mixed Marriage, produced by the Abbey Theater in 1911, is a study of religious intolerance; *Jane Clegg*, a drama of character. *John Ferguson*, presented by the Theater Guild of New York in 1921, has added little to the reputation of the dramatist.

The Magnanimous Lover, a study in one act of the self-righteousness of an Ulster Protestant, caused nearly as great a riot when it was produced by the Abbey Theater in 1912 as *The Playboy of the Western World*.

Mr. Ervine is a realist, transcribing the prosaic life of the artisan class, of which he has first-hand knowledge, since he was the son of a working-man in the Belfast shipyards. His dialogue is good and his technique clever, but it is in the creation of character that he most excels. His people live and leave abiding memories. They are definite personalities even though confined within the one-act form.

Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary, the last play of Mr. Ervine,

was produced in New York in 1923 with Mrs. Fiske in the title rôle.

STUDY OF Mixed Marriage

In four acts; produced first at the Abbey Theater, in 1911. Given in New York by the Irish Theater Company in the autumn of 1911 and again on tour in 1913. Given in London. Revived in New York in 1920.

The obvious theme is the objection to marriage between those with different religious belief, in this instance, a Catholic and a Protestant. The underlying motive is the arraignment of bigotry and the personal prejudice that will bring ruin rather than yield. Less directly, it is a study of the marriage relation: the elder couple are farther apart in their outlook upon life, for all of their united faith, than the younger. As Mrs. Rainey gives us a hint in the first act:

Sure some people are that different from each other they niver find it out.

The dramatist has treated the subject with justice. There is also an underlying motive of the relation of the older generation to the younger and of the rebellion of the rising generation against the arbitrary patriarchal rule.

The whole situation in the Rainey family, the father's iron rule, the son's half-concealed rebellion, the mother's patience and peace-making, and the love of the oldest son for a Catholic—the source of conflict—is skilfully set forth in the first act. Also the strike situation. Rainey by using his influence to prevent a religious riot can keep the peace and win the day. In Act Two John Rainey allows his anger at the thought of his son's marriage to a Catholic to turn him into a religious fanatic. Note the preparation for the riot which we know must come. Do you consider the reiterated references to death by Nora in the last act a good dramatic device or is it overdone? In the dialogue between Mrs. Rainey and Nora, in the second act, the deeper relations of man and

woman in marriage are discussed. This goes out of the particular and into the universal. Here again we have the maternal instinct of woman's love. Says Mrs. Rainey:

Me an' my man has had our ups an' downs, an' he's a bit domineerin', but A think A'd do it again if A had me life over again . . . They're strange, an' they're not considerate. They don't understand weemen . . . but ye get to understand them soon enough. Ye know they're quare oul humbugs . . . They're just like big childer.

My man twists about an' thinks he's the big strong man, but A'm jus' takin' care of him the same as A did o' Hughie whin he wus a chile. It's the way o' the wurl' with weemen.

The star character is, of course, Mrs. Rainey, with her broad tolerance, her tact, and her kindly humor. Note that the author in a single sentence of stage-direction visualizes her: "Mrs. Rainey is a slight, gentle woman, patient with the awful patience of a woman who has always submitted to her husband's will without respecting him." She pours oil upon the troubled waters and has a good word for every one, even the masters.

Sure, it's no good callin' people bad names. It's alwis bin like this. . . . If ye wur brought up like them ye'd be the same as they are. . . .

A'm on no side. There's right wi' iv'ry man, an' there's wrong too. Ye're both right an' ye're both wrong, but sure ye're just the same t' me whether ye are or not.

When in spite of her efforts trouble rests upon the home she cries out:

Dear-a-dear, it's the quare hard work fur a wumman, keepin' men at peace!

When the final tragedy overshadows them, instead of reproach, she feels only sympathy for the big obstinate child who has brought it upon them:

Aw, my poor man, my poor man!

John Rainey is well-drawn. He holds his attitude of bigotry consistently, muttering in the presence of the dying Nora:

A wus right. A know A wus right!

His contempt for a woman's judgment and his lack of appreciation for her constant ministration creep out continually:

MRS. RAINNEY: A'm niver done mendin'.

RAINEY: Aw, well, it's pastime fur ye. Whin ye've nathin' else til do, ye can sit down an' take yer aise an' darn a few socks. It's the quare aisy time weemen has be men.

Note the few characters with which this theme of strike, riot, and bloodshed is portrayed. There are but two outside the family circle of the Raineys.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

What is the theme of the play?

Is there an under-plot?

Which character is best drawn?

Does the author treat the subject fairly and impartially?

Compare Mrs. Rainey to Maggie in *What Every Woman Knows*.

Discuss her comment upon men in Act Two.

While Mrs. Rainey wins most sympathy, is not her husband as well drawn?

Is the last act convincing?

If it is not, state why.

Is this a tragedy, a serious drama, or a sentimental play?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

Mixed Marriage (1911), *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. II (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Jane Clegg (1911).

John Ferguson (1914).

Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary (1922).

Published by the Macmillan Co.

Lennox Robinson: Contemporary Folk-Drama

The folk-drama of Lady Gregory, Synge, and Padraic Colum has been added to in recent years by the young Cork dramatist, Lennox Robinson (b. 1886). The peasant-play, after the acceptance of Synge, became the vogue, and many imitators sought to manufacture "near-drama" after the pattern of the creators. None of these attempts are particularly interesting until we come to the work of Mr. Robinson. While he follows the early school, he is not a servile imitator, but combines, in a fashion all his own, the drollery of Lady Gregory, the realism of Colum, and the ironic speech of Synge.

His earliest play, *The Clancy Name*, was produced by the Abbey Theater before its author was twenty-two years of age. It presents a strong ironic situation but uses the long arm of coincidence to solve it quite unconvincingly. It is a one-act play and the best of Mr. Robinson's three early efforts. With *The Cross-Roads* and *The Harvest* we are not particularly concerned. The next two were historical and patriotic. *The Lost Leader*, which appeared in 1919, takes up the legend of Parnell's reappearance in the crisis of Ireland's affairs. It was the *White-Headed Boy*, in 1920, which established Mr. Robinson's fame as a dramatist and carried it across the sea.

Mr. Robinson has a happy combination of form and content, droll humor, and impartial attitude in presenting a theme. He has twice undertaken the direction of the Abbey Theater Players and assisted in the establishment of a Drama League Branch in Ireland, the first in the British Isles. Just now he is much interested in the rural libraries that are being founded in his country under the Carnegie plan. *The*

White-Headed Boy is especially suited for group-reading.

STUDY OF *The White-Headed Boy*

A comedy in three acts, published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, first produced at the Abbey Theater in 1916; it had a successful American season in 1921.

The theme is the rebellion of a family against the deprivation which they endure for the sake of the youngest brother, the mother's favorite, her "white-headed boy"; and the clever way in which in the end he walks off with his bride, all the available money of the family, and the position designed for his brother, while he assumes it to be a sacrifice on his part and grumbles at his lack of freedom.

Peter will have to stay on here.

Jane can't get married—

Baby can't go to Dublin!

How is it we all forgot them?

Thinking all the time of Denis we were.

The irony of the mother's coaxing words is inimitable:

Don't take it hardly, Denis. There are worse things than a shop and a farm and three hundred and twenty pounds in your hand . . .

I'm not going to grumble, Mother, where's the use? I've always had to do what you all made me do, and I suppose I may as well go on with it. I can't fight you all . . .

Note the utter absence of artificial contrivance in the structure of the play. The situations develop quite simply and naturally. Something absolutely new is introduced in the stage-directions in whimsical narrative form. Instead of saying, "Peter goes out at left," the author confidentially whispers, "Is n't she cute the way she got rid of Peter?" There is something of the whimsy of Barrie in the play but nothing of Barrie's sentimentality.

Aunt Ellen is the leading character and affords excellent opportunity for the actress. Compare her with the Apple-Woman in *Spreading the News* by Lady Gregory. Every one knows the mother, tenderly deceiving herself, attributing qualities to her boy which he has never possessed. Denis, receiving the sacrifices of the family quite as a matter of course, wanting "ease, no responsibility, and something to grumble at," is another type frequently met.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Is Denis entirely selfish or self-deceived?

Is his outburst in regard to freedom of action sincere?

Would he really have preferred the dinner-pail and the work on the street?

Is the spoiling process ever successful in producing strong characters?

Note the irony in the fact that the food repudiated for Denis is thought good enough for George, the wage-earner.

What is the probable outcome of Denis, Delia, and the shop?

Why is much of this play lost in the acting, and group-reading so satisfactory?

Compare the situation of Kate with the girls in *Madras House*. With the three daughters of Monsieur Dupont.

Where would you place Mr. Robinson as a dramatist, judging him by this play?

LIST OF REFERENCE WORKS ON THE IRISH RENAISSANCE

The Contemporary Drama of Ireland, Ernest A. Boyd (Little, Brown & Co.), 1917.

Irish Plays and Playwrights, Cornelius Weygandt (Houghton Mifflin Co.), 1913.

The Celtic Dawn, Lloyd R. Morris (Macmillan Co.), 1917.

Our Irish Theater, Lady Gregory (G. P. Putnam's Sons), 1913.

The Cutting of an Agate, William Butler Yeats (Macmillan Co.).

Magazine Articles

Ireland's National Drama, J. E. Hoare, *North American Review*, 194, 1911.

The Irish Drama, by Vida D. Scudder, in *Poet Lore*, 16, 1905.

The Irish Theater and the People, Lady Gregory, *Yale Review*, 1, 1912.

Lady Gregory and the Irish Literary Movement, Padraic Colum, *Forum*, 53, 1915.

Lady Gregory and the Abbey Theater, John Quinn, *Outlook*, 99, 1911.

The Plays of John M. Synge, Charles A. Bennett, *Yale Review*, 1, 1912.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OF THE IRISH REVIVAL

The work of the Abbey Theater.

William Butler Yeats. Poet, Dramatist, Philosopher.

The wealth of Irish legendry and folk-lore.

Lady Gregory's great service to the theater.

Irish Peasant Drama.

The Deirdre legend as treated by Synge, Yeats, Æ, and Fiona McLeod.

Does the fame of Synge rest more securely upon *The Riders to the Sea* or *The Playboy of the Western World*?

Upon what element does the charm of Dunsany depend?

Discuss the realism of Dunsany.

The international popularity of St. John Ervine.

The present status of the Abbey Theater and the work of Lennox Robinson.

ACT FOUR

WITH A SOUTHERN SETTING

I

THE SPANISH REVIVAL

A glass picks up scattered rays and forms them into one beam of light; the dark night is made from lesser shadows; the mountain from grains of earth, and the sea from drops of water. In the same way do I form my drama; from scraps of conversation, from vague smiles, from curious glances, from the thousand and one trivialities which are scattered in cafés, theaters, meetings, and pageants and which are now floating in the air about me.

—*The Great Galeoto*, José Echegaray

SPANISH TRANSITIONS

To pass very briefly over the period between the Golden Age of Spain and her modern Renaissance, the nation was sinking into intellectual darkness even before the death of the great dramatist, Calderón. Calderón died in obscurity and without royal favor; he was the last of the brilliant coterie of the days of Philip IV. For one hundred years no other creative genius arose to compare with his. French influence dominated such drama as existed, and a few inferior imitators of Calderón appeared. To Moratín, who sought to reform the drama, we owe the Don Juan story, which figures so prominently in later literature, especially in Molière and Byron.

Since 1830 an intellectual revival has come to Spanish letters. Censorship of the press was abolished, ecclesiastical domination lightened, and the Spanish Academy established.

Romanticism, which has passed in the last three decades

from the literature of almost every language, was slower in leaving the glamour-lit land of Spain. Manners and customs have changed less in Spain since the days when Lope de Vega cried, "Love excuses all!" than in most other countries. Spanish life, upon the stage, although it may be realistic, appears more medieval, remote, and romantic than sections of English life so transcribed. The Spanish ideals of honor, the obligation to avenge insult with blood, to reward benefaction with favors even unto the second and third generations, and the Spanish "cult of woman" are the elements around which the plots revolve. The church still dominates its national life; monasteries and convents still exist; and the colorful Spanish dances and bull-fights remain a feature of the civilization.

In the recent Spanish drama social forces or even abstract ideas have replaced the hero and the villain; the long discourses have been discarded; and the drama has been brought nearer to life. It creates the illusion of life more often, perhaps, than that of any other country.

TWO NOBEL PRIZE RECIPIENTS

José Echegaray

Until recently the drama of Spain has been little known to America because so few translations were available, but since the bestowing of the Nobel prize for literature upon two Spanish dramatists more plays have been translated and critical comment has become more frequent. Whatever else the student may choose to know of Spanish literature, he should at least know the most distinctive work of these two dramatists who have been honored internationally.

José Echegaray has lived the equivalent of three lives full enough to satisfy the most of men. He was so proficient in mathematics that he was given a professorship in the School of Engineers at twenty-five. Ten years of teaching and writing articles upon scientific subjects followed. Life No. 1. His writings upon political subjects gained for him a

place in the Revolutionary Cabinet, where he was concerned with the problems of commerce, education, and finance. Life No. 2. He left politics in 1874 for the drama and has been internationally recognized as a master in that. Life No. 3. He was scientist, statesman, man of letters. And in his eighties he took up politics once more—started upon a fourth career! Echegaray was born in 1883 and in 1904 divided the Nobel prize with the poet Mistral. He died in 1916.

Within the quarter of a century which he was devoting to his life as a dramatist, Echegaray wrote about sixty plays. Although he was greatly influenced by Ibsen, most apparently in his *Son of Don Juan*, which is a Spanish edition of *Ghosts*, he is more akin to an earlier day than to the modern movement, making use of the artificial methods of the French craftsmen and very often the romantic spirit of the French novelists.

Echegaray is a wonderful craftsman; he has been likened to Scribe and to Sardou. Careful study of *The Great Galeoto*, which was produced for the first time in 1881, and in which he reached the climax of his genius, is recommended.

STUDY OF *The Great Galeoto*

The theme is the power of false suggestion to create the guilt which it suspects. An innocent man and woman have no defense against a world which insists upon their guilt. They are robbed of every human affection and finally forced into each other's arms. Compare the suspicion of the husband in *Monna Vanna* by Maeterlinck, and its consequence. Compare the disintegrating power of suspicion upon the character of Othello. From a mental image which had no reality the tragedy results as surely as if it were true. Compare also the undermining of the will through a useless doubt in *The Father* by Strindberg. The doubter in each instance is not reassured by the truth and seeks only the verification of his suspicions. *The Great Galeoto* is a powerful study

in the psychology of evil thinking. The title refers to the story of Paolo and Francesca in Dante, in which Galeoto was a go-between, arranging the guilty love of Lancelot and Queen Guinevere. In Echegaray's drama, the evil thoughts of the world about them, in one great composite spirit, constitute the pander of innocence.

In structure, the dramatist has accomplished that which seems impossible. His principal character, call him hero or villain, is not a person but a hydra-headed monster that never appears upon the stage and yet creates every situation. Note how cleverly the prologue sets forth the theme and how Ernest works out in his life tragedy the very thing he sought in vain to put upon the paper.

Each head of that monster of a hundred thousand heads, whom I call Society, takes part in my play only for a short time, speaks one word—no more—directs one glance only. Perhaps all this action is summed up in words without passion, without anger, indifferently and heedlessly, and oftentimes for amusement only. . . . But from all this there results the action, the struggle, and its victims.

Observe the use of long soliloquies, of a clandestine meeting and the inevitable surprise, of the duel—all contrivances of an earlier technique and savoring of melodrama. There is a persistence of ancient tradition and lingering romanticism combined with great cleverness and a powerful dramatic motive. The play was written mostly in verse.

How has the author succeeded in visualizing the principal character, the great Galeoto? Cannot you see this malevolent creature slinking behind every scene, wagging its many tongues, nodding and winking, directing the course of events toward inevitable ruin? Ernest alone realizes who is responsible for the ruin of three lives.

You invent things and I assimilate them! . . . If any one should ask you who was the go-between in all this infamy, tell him it was yourself—and, with you, the tongues of foolish gossips!

Let no one go near this woman, for she is mine! That is what the world wants, and I accept its decision. It brings her to my arms!

Theodora is an especially pure-minded woman and unsuspecting. She is contaminated by the thought of suspicion about her and becomes uneasy, unhappy, and restless. She muses sadly:

The next thing you know I'll be thinking *myself* guilty. Calumny does n't only stain—it degrades one! It is such a cursed product that it takes possession of our consciences with the flavor of crime.

And again she cries:

Why do you want to convince me that my love for my husband is growing smaller and that a rival love which is impure is taking its place? Why, I love him as much as I always have, from whom you are separating me! . . . At times I almost doubt myself. . . . I ask myself if I am what every one says I am.

Repulsed because she refuses to confess to a wrong which she has not committed, driven from her husband's presence, she questions:

What's the use of being innocent?

Ernest is of a high-strung artistic temperament, open to suggestion, understanding more of the situation than Theodora, but just as helpless to combat it.

Strong arms can fight against the waves of the sea, but there is no way of struggling against the subtle poisons of these stagnant pools. . . .

I have learned that whatever people say, whether with good or bad intent, commences by being a lie and ends by being the truth.

He is singularly responsive to love and confidence and capable of great loyalty.

Anyone can find in my heart exactly what he puts into it. . . .

But when a man like myself is trampled underfoot, declared a scoundrel, without any reason for it, and when he is led—*forced* to commit a crime—the struggle is dangerous for everybody.

Like Theodora he finds his own self-respect gone beneath the suggestion of evil.

The horrible part of it is that thought itself is corrupted when it comes in contact with a vile idea! That the mind by merely thinking of guilt becomes familiar with it!

Denounced and despised, he mutters:

What's the use of being loyal?

Julian is an ordinary high-minded man with the Spanish notion of honor which binds him to the service of Ernest. In the opening scene he declares:

If this boy needs my heart's blood let him ask for it.

Then the hydra-headed Doubt creeps into his life to destroy it.

It advances slowly, takes possession to-day of a thought, to-morrow of a heart-beat, and undermines the will, little by little.

He begins to watch every movement for confirmation of his scarcely admitted fears:

Why do they look at me like that? Why? . . .

This doubt grows and grows: my heart sinks, and a red mantle seems to be extending before my eyes.

Finally he forces the issue with Theodora:

If you want my forgiveness, confess your guilt.

Theodora, having no guilt to confess, can only deny, but it is not denial that her husband seeks now. Denial he cannot believe; guilt he will readily believe. The poison has done its work.

Pepito is a malicious mischief-maker, but Mercedes and Severo represent the ordinary bystander in such a situation, much more ready to accept of evil than good report:

When the river murmurs, there's water flowing—more or less.

This is the usual conclusion of the world and its justification for gossip.

The Great Galeoto was first produced at the Teatro Español in Madrid in 1881. It has been received enthusiastically wherever it has been put on.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Is there a suggestion of the mathematician in the handling of this theme?

Who is the principal character of the play?

What is the place of Pepito in the dramatic scheme?

Can innocence and loyalty be destroyed by evil suggestion?

Discuss the disintegrating effect of suspicion upon Julian, Ernest, and Theodora.

Are Mercedes and Severo more than usually malicious?

Select instances of forced exposition from the play.

Where does the treatment approach the melodramatic?

Where do you find traces of the Spanish ideals of honor?

Discuss the effectiveness of the prologue and the manner of selecting the title?

Does the ending seem inevitable?

Does the uselessness of it all leave you with a feeling of pity and terror akin to the Greek tragedy?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

The Great Galeoto, *Contemporary Dramatist Series* (Richard G. Badger).

Folly or Saintliness, translated by Ruth Lansing as *Madman or Saint* (morality carried to the *n*th degree tends to approach madness), *Poet Lore*, 23, 1912.

The World and His Wife, *Representative Continental Dramas*, Montrose J. Moses. (Little, Brown & Co.).

The Madman Divine (the man who sought perfectibility), Elizabeth H. West, *Poet Lore*, 19, 1908.

Some Aspects of Echegaray, Katharine A. Graham (*Poet Lore*, 1910).

Jacinto Benavente

Jacinto Benavente (b. 1866) after Echegaray is probably the best-known Spanish dramatist outside of his own country since the days of Lope de Vega, Cervantes, and Calderón. International attention and interest were directed to him in 1922 when he received the Nobel prize for literary achievement, and many of his plays are now available in good translations.

The young Benavente first studied law but abandoned that career for the theater, becoming an actor to further his training in the art of the drama.

He is generally considered the greatest living dramatist of Spain and among the best of any language. Belonging to the new generation, he is as realistic as the most modern of playwrights. While he is concerned with a thesis or moral problem quite often, he is never didactic. He pictures contemporary life with all its vanity, folly, and self-satisfaction; he is gay and satirical by turns; he is occasionally serious but never very much below the surface of things. His dialogue is brilliant and his characters remarkable for what they say rather than for any depth of emotion.

Señor Benavente is more happy in his creation of women characters than men. His heroines are much more convincing than his masculine principals. His acknowledged literary gods are Shakespeare and Molière, and he has given much time and strength to the translation of Shakespeare into his own language. In a little more than thirty years of steady labor he has written more than sixty plays, which range from tragedy to comedy, from realism to allegory. In all, eighty-eight dramatic compositions have come from his pen, including short plays and translations.

A number of Benavente's best plays are now available in the recent translations of John Garrett Underhill, with a valuable introduction. The careful reading and discussion of *Bonded Interests* is recommended. *The Passion Flower* has

become familiar to the American theater-going public through the interpretation of Miss Nance O'Neill.

STUDY OF The Bonds of Interest

The play is in three acts, with a prologue. It was produced first at the Teatro Lara, in Madrid, 1907. It was given by the Theater Guild of New York in 1919, and at the Everyman Theater in London in 1920.

In theme it is a modern harlequinade, a criticism of life beneath the mummery of amusing puppets. Two adventurers enter a community and so entwine the interests of others about their own that their "bonds of interest" prove their salvation. In the end they have their creditors and accusers all forcing upon them their own desires. Leander, who insists upon honesty and poverty, is counseled to resign himself to riches.

You have no right to carry your prejudices to an extreme at which they become offensive to others.

The full import of the theme is beautifully set forth in the closing speech of Silvia:

Into the hearts of all there descends sometimes from heaven an invisible thread . . . the invisible thread of love, which makes these men and women, as it does these puppets which seem like men, almost divine . . . and whispers to us still that this farce is not all a farce, that there is something noble, something divine in our lives which is true and eternal, and which shall not close when the farce of life shall close.

This is the final note of optimism with which the author closes his arraignment of life's follies.

By setting the time at the beginning of the seventeenth century, with imaginary characters, the author avoids the necessity of realism and is free to indulge his fancy as he wills. He frankly admits the utter impossibility of it all in the prologue:

This is a little play of puppets, impossible in theme, without any reality at all. . . . Everything happens in it that never could happen. . . . Its personages are not real men and women . . . but dolls of paste and cardboard, moving upon wires which are visible to the dimmest eye.

Compare the romantic setting and treatment of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. After the prologue the audience is prepared to accept without question the most improbable incident. After all, the dialogue is the thing. The long speeches of Crispín are a violation of modern technique, but we loiter over them with keen pleasure. The interest is sustained admirably and the suspense kept up until the end. Note how the unwillingness of Leander to marry Silvia without full confession of his trickery prolongs the suspense in the last act.

The author has succeeded in making his pasteboard puppets very human. Crispín, of course, is the one who creates every situation. He is one of the "free-born subjects of the Kingdom of Roguery"—he has gained knowledge of human nature through enforced meditation in the galleys:

Men are like merchandise; they are worth more or less according to the skill of the salesman who markets them.

And Crispín goes to market with all mankind in his stock. The character of Crispín is best described by a few of the epigrams which persist in the memory:

Introduce yourself to no man when in need.

If I had had more knavery and less stupidity, instead of rowing I might have commanded the ship.

I had rather deal with a thousand knaves than one fool.

And in serious vein:

In the greatest misery to which we sink there is always something in us which rises superior to ourselves. We should despise ourselves too much if we did not believe we were better than our lives.

The satire of the law in the person of the doctor, with his

prodigious tome, is delightfully done. The pompous gentleman declaims:

Justice is all wisdom, and wisdom is all order, and order is all reason, and reason is all procedure, and procedure is all logic.

Through the process of law and order the creditors see themselves brought to speedy ruin. The innkeeper protests:

Write nothing. It will only make black white, and in the end we shall be left without our money.

In the end the good doctor, by the changing of a comma, alters the whole process to every one's satisfaction. The wily Crispín is rivaled.

O excellent comma! O marvelous comma! Stupendous Genius and Miracle of Justice! Oracle of the Law! Thou Monster of Jurisprudence!

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Is there a reminder of the author's early connection with a circus in this play?

How does the author enlist his reader's sympathy with the romantic treatment in the beginning?

Which is most important, action, characterization, or dialogue?

Are the "pasteboard puppets" humanized?

Compare the bombastic effrontery of Crispín with the braggadocio of Cyrano de Bergerac.

Did Crispín who created "the bonds of interest" play upon well-known and universal weaknesses of men?

Discuss the statement of Crispín in Act Two to Columbine concerning the art of living.

Compare the dual personality he describes, one born to fly, the other to grovel, with the dual will of St. Paul.

Discuss the cheery optimism of Silvia's closing speech.

Select instances of satire, epigram, and philosophy from the play.

A Spanish critic calls this play "a jewel in the literature of Spain"; from your knowledge of the Spanish drama, do you agree?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

Plays by Jacinto Benavente, translated by John Garrett Underhill, with an introduction, First and Second Series (Charles Scribner's Sons).

The Bonds of Interest. Chief Contemporary Dramatists, Vol. II (Houghton Mifflin Co.). Also in *Representative Continental Dramas* (Little, Brown & Co.).

Galdós: The Grand Old Man of Modern Spain

Benito Pérez Galdós (b. 1845) is rated by some commentators upon the contemporary literature of Spain as the highest in the little group holding the center of the stage. He began his career as a novelist and has about fifty stories to his credit, besides his dramatic work; the fertility of the Spanish mind since the days of Lope de Rueda is astonishing. There is no doubt that the lofty conception of his thought excels that of his distinguished contemporaries. Each of these outstanding figures has, by his own methods, attacked the follies of tradition in Spanish life and sought to build up for his countrymen reality. Benavente in one of his plays makes a character say:

Life is a forest many centuries old, and our souls are rooted in it like centenarian trees.

The awakening of Spain is the theme of all three, and the folly most often depicted by Señor Galdós is the fantastic Spanish ideal of honor which colored all the national life. His first play was dramatized from one of his stories and failed because the public could not applaud a hero who declined to heal his honor with blood. He is the first Spanish dramatist who dared to have the husband pardon a guilty wife. It was not *national*.

The Duchess of San Quentín, one of the best known of the plays, was fairly successful, but it did not approach the triumph of *Electra*, given at Madrid in 1901. *Electra* was highly approved and as vigorously disapproved by the various groups; the conservative party and the church condemned it, and in one instance the actors were obliged to make a hasty exit before the performance was over to avoid violence. Of the closing words of the play the author remarks, "By accepting, as the rest of the world has done, the achievements of science will Spain progress, and only thus can she come to life." The study chosen is *The Grandfather*, which, next to *Electra*, was the author's greatest success and is more universal in its appeal.

STUDY OF El Abuelo (The Grandfather)

The play is in five acts and was translated by Elizabeth Wallace in *Poet Lore*, May-June, 1910. It was produced first at the Teatro Español in 1904.

The theme is the conflict between love and the traditional family honor. To understand the play one must know the extent to which the ideals of honor obsess the Spanish gentleman. To relate the theme very briefly, an old nobleman, impoverished and meeting with ingratitude everywhere from those whom he has befriended, learns that of his two granddaughters, the only ones left him to love, one is not the child of his son. There has been a blot upon the family honor. To discover which child is the illegitimate one and disown her becomes his ruling passion, driving him so near insanity that he is about to be placed in an asylum. He learns that the one he loves best is the usurper, but when in his utter friendlessness she comes to him he forgets the stain upon the family honor and declares that "only love is eternal truth."

There are weak places in the construction, especially in the end of that act where the count in a passion denounces the countess. The dialogue is quick, with overlapping sentences.

Count Albrit, the old lion, has been likened in his fierce

pain and loneliness to King Lear. He, too, suffers from ingratitude:

The breath of ingratitude blows in my face.

Like an old lion, indeed, he threatens those who attack him:

Do not bind these hands which raised you from poverty!

He has allowed pride to drive the sunshine from his heart.

The storm is in my soul. Do you know the storm I have here?
It is called *Doubt*!

Finally the sunshine of love triumphs, and he muses:

If we could convert honor into a material substance it would be an excellent thing with which to fertilize the land.

The children are charming and afford a balance for every scene in which they appear. The mother is the sort of woman who "empties her conscience of old sins to make room for new ones."

A strange play for a Spanish audience in which the ties of kinship are ignored, in which there is no love-intrigue, and no pathological interest.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Discuss the Spanish ideals of family honor which make this play possible.

Note the amusing reference to American oil interests.

Is the dialogue realistic and the action convincing?

Why is the domestic tragedy of the tutor related?

Compare Count Albrit with King Lear.

Compare Dolly with Cordelia.

What purpose does the tardy repentance of the countess serve?

What dramatic purpose is served by allowing the real granddaughter to consent to his confinement?

Where is the conflict of this play?

Who said, "You belong to a race of madmen, of burlesque knights who wear pasteboard honor"?

Was that not a daring remark for a Spanish audience?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

The Grandfather, Poet Lore, 21, 1910.

The Duchess of San Quentín, in *Masterpieces of Modern Spanish Drama* (D. Appleton & Co.).

Electra, Drama, 2, 1911, and in *Contemporary Spanish Dramatists* (Richard G. Badger).

OTHER SPANISH DRAMATISTS OF THE MODERN MOVEMENT

While Echegaray, Galdós, and Benavente would be named as the three Spanish dramatists best known outside their own country, the brothers Seraffín and Joaquín Alvarez Quintero must be mentioned as the most popular playwrights in Spain at the present time. They excel in light and clever comedies and farces, of which nearly one hundred have been produced. In America the best known of their comedies is *The Women's Town*, with its picture of life in a sleepy Andalusian village and its sparkling gaiety. Concha Puerto is the incarnation of the spirit of the town: she selects the girl with whom the hero shall fall in love, announces everywhere that the courtship is on, offers her balcony, and in the end accomplishes her purpose.

This is a town in which the women rule and command. . . . They will get you acquainted; they will arrange an engagement party for you; they will offer you Concha Puerto's balcony to do your courting, and they will settle the day of the wedding. . . . And so it goes on and on; whether you do or whether you don't, you are bound straight for the wedding!

The hero was warned, and the effort he made to extricate himself from the tissue of gossip woven about him in *The Women's Town* and his final acceptance of Concha Puerto's

balcony form the theme of this two-act comedy. It is an excellent play for group-reading.

Joaquín Dicenta belongs to the school of Echegaray, but while the earlier playwright dealt with the middle classes and the wealthy, Dicenta was the first to treat of the proletariat on the Spanish stage. He finds his themes among the poor and downtrodden. *Juan José* is a powerful drama of passion, the love of a laboring man for a light woman. While it deals with two classes, the employer and employed, it is not a class struggle but a conflict of two men for a woman's love. The study of *Juan José* is important as a transition between the early and modern movements.

In *The Claws* by Linares Rivas we are shown the tragedy which sometimes results when a community is bound by antiquated law and tradition in the midst of modern life. The good Father Muinos, who walks upon the edge of a chasm for his liberal sentiments, declares:

The hungry should be judged by one who perhaps has been without food; the humble by one who has never known pride; the persecuted by one who perhaps has never known a peaceful hour.

There are several writers of poetic drama in Spain to-day; chief among them is Eduardo Marquina. According to some Spanish critics his *The Sun Has Set in Flanders* is the best national play in the last twenty-five years. He also writes in prose. Two volumes of plays by the poet-dramatist, Gregorio Martínez Sierra, are now available in good translation. Francisco Villæspesa is better known as a lyric poet than a dramatist, but his dramatic treatment of the story of Judith and Holofernes and his *Palace of Pearls* are distinctive additions to poetic drama.

The short play of one or two acts which has recently become popular in Spain may be illustrated by *The Passing of the Magi*, a beautiful story of the illusions by which men live, written by Eduardo Zamacois. Señor Zamacois lectured in the United States upon Spanish Literature in 1917.

The Spanish play of to-day lacks emotion and action. It

presents the life of the street, the theater, and the café, with a realism which differs from that of other countries. The Quinteros declared that the audience should be made to forget that it was in a theater at all. There are few problem-plays, but life itself passes by; and because it is life there are problems.

GUIMERA: THE CATALONIAN DRAMATIST

If Angel Guimera had written his plays in Spanish they would probably have sooner attained to an international reputation. He is associated with the literary movement of Catalonia; a province of Spain. It has been his task to surmount the barriers of a provincial tongue, and this he has most successfully done. His plays are now translated into twenty languages.

The establishment of a Catalan Theater encouraged the production of provincial plays, and Guimera soon became the acknowledged head of the theater movement. He started his literary career as a poet; his earlier plays are written in blank verse. Later he abandoned verse for prose and for a time became interested in the problem-play, somewhat after the manner of Ibsen. This, too, he left behind him for realism, the simple and sincere reflection of life. He is a master of technique, of environment and color, and has demonstrated his craftsmanship in the making of tragedies, comedies, and farces.

Though he writes in a provincial language, the appeal of his plays is universal, and all humanity his theme. One of the few depictions of the life of the Christ in drama is his *Jesus of Nazareth*.

The play which is most representative of his genius is *Marta of the Lowlands*, and it is recommended for study.

STUDY OF *Marta of the Lowlands*

The play is in three acts and has been published in the *Drama League Series* with an introduction by John Garrett

Underhill. It was chosen by the Mexican actress, Virginia Fabregas, for the benefit performance for the sufferers from the Galveston flood. It was produced in New York with Mrs. Fiske in the title rôle. It has been given in France, Germany, Italy, Serbia, and South America.

The theme is the tragedy of a situation which is so unalterable as to take on the aspect of fate, the inability of a woman to escape the dragging net of an unholy passion when she wakens to a real love. Marta is akin to Rose Bernd and to Tess of the D'Urbervilles. In this case it is a conflict of the servant and the master. Arbitrary power triumphs over helpless weakness.

Note the directness and naturalness with which the whole situation is set forth in the first act. The audience is acquainted with the shameful past and the tragedy is foreshadowed, first when Manelich muses that the wolf may come in his absence, and again when he relates the killing of the wolf with his hands. This is his last speech: "I have killed a wolf." Is the dialogue natural and economical?

Marta is the victim of circumstance, Manelich the simple soul taught by nature and looking up reverently to nature's God. Roused to anger he is a superman, avenging the woman whom he loves. Compare with Juan José. In Barcelona they have erected a statue of Manelich in the public park.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Would you say that Marta was an evil woman?

How does the position of Sebastian render her helpless?

Compare Marta with Rose Bernd. With Rosa in *Juan José*.

Compare Sebastian with Paco in *Juan José*.

Explain the dramatic significance of the wolf in Act One.

How does the situation take on the aspect of fate?

Is the tragic ending inevitable from the characters involved?

Does it arouse the feeling of pity and terror which is the true end of tragedy?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

Marta of the Lowlands, Angel Guimera, *Drama League Series* (Doubleday, Page & Co.).

Daniela, Angel Guimera, *Masterpieces of Spanish Drama*, edited by Barrett Clark (D. Appleton & Co.).

The Women's Town, Seraffín and Alvarez Quintero.

Juan José, Joaquín Dicenta.

The Claws, Linares Rivas.

The Passing of the Magi, Eduardo Zamacois.

When the Roses Bloom Again, Eduardo Marquina.

In Contemporary Spanish Dramatists, edited by Charles Alfred Turrell, With a valuable introduction (Richard G. Badger).

Plays of G. Martínez Sierra, in two volumes (E. P. Dutton & Co.).

The Cradle Song, G. Martínez Sierra, *Poet Lore*, winter number, 1917.

General References

See *The Spanish Drama of To-day*, by Elizabeth Wallace, in *Atlantic Monthly*, 102, 1908.

For the modern movements of Spain, the drama of the Spanish colonies in South America, and the work of Florencio Sánchez, consult *The Drama of Transition*, by Isaac Goldberg (D. Appleton & Co.).

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OF THE MODERN MOVEMENT IN SPAIN

Formulate in not more than three hundred words the transition from Calderón to Echegaray.

Discuss Spanish romanticism and ideals of honor.

The intellectual revival after the age of darkness.

The threefold contribution of Echegaray to Spanish life and letters.

The realism and modernism of Benavente.

The new and the old at strife in the work of Galdós.

Modern Spanish comedy: the Quinteros.

Recent Spanish experimentation.

The influence of Spain upon the drama of other lands.

The amazing productivity and versatility of Spanish dramatists.

II

THE ITALIAN DRAMA

The contemporary drama of Italy, like every other living literary manifestation, mirrors the interests and the thinking of the society that produces and enjoys it. With a knowledge of the political, social, religious and artistic currents that have swayed the nation for the last hundred years, one could almost prognosticate the drama.

The Contemporary Drama of Italy, Lander MacClintock

THE FOUNDATIONS: GOLDONI AND ALFIERI

THE drama never attained in Italy to that luxuriant flowering which characterized the Golden Age of England, Spain, France, and Germany. There are no names in Italy to rank with Shakespeare, Caldrón, Molière, and Goethe; there are but two outstanding names in the history of the drama before the nineteenth century, and those are not of the first rank in the world's masters of the art. The fact that a period of five centuries of literary history, a period which made signal contributions to the sister arts of music and painting, left so little of dramatic worth, demonstrates that the drama was not a spiritual necessity to the beauty-loving Italians in the sense that it was a necessity to the sterner peoples of the far North.

The love of a spectacle rather than the serious drama has kept the Italian *commedia dell' arte* with its pantomime and improvised dialogue upon the boards until the present day.

Carlo Goldoni (1707-93) converted this folk-drama into literature; he developed the popular *commedia dell' arte* into an equally popular comedy of manners. The Italian comedy descends directly from Goldoni. He is the forerunner of Ferrari and of Giacosa.

What Goldoni did for comedy was accomplished for tragedy by Vittorio Alfieri (1749-1803), who enjoyed a European reputation during his lifetime. With Alfieri eighteenth-

century tragedy reached its culmination and a movement started which enlisted many imitators. Alfieri was cosmopolitan in his tastes and dedicated one of his plays to the American hero, George Washington.

Metastasio, the father of the modern Italian opera, was contemporary with Goldoni and, for a part of his activity, with Alfieri. He left twenty-eight operas and eight sacred dramas.

To sum up in a single sentence the vital dramatic traditions of Italy, before the nineteenth century we have Goldoni in comedy, and in tragedy, Alfieri.

ROMANTICISM WAXES AND WANES

The romantic movement flourished in Italy, as elsewhere, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. There, as elsewhere, it declined and passed before the close of the century.

Alessandro Manzoni (1785-1873), Italy's greatest Romanticist, was a great admirer of Shakespeare and made him his model. His genius was recognized and defended, under attack, by Goethe. Manzoni is important in the development of the drama because he threw off the shackles of the classic traditions. He was the herald of the new day, not only in form but in the representation of life.

It will profit the student of the development of the drama but little to loiter over the followers of these three fore-runners who attained to national fame, since so few illustrations of their work are available in translation. There was Marengo, with his cult of the medieval; there was Pietro Cossa, the good craftsman who went in for many of the excesses of the neo-romantic movement; there was Giacometti, the master of melodrama, who produced the first comedy of manners of the modern school; and there was Paolo Ferrari, the greatest name of the generation preceding Giacosa, with his incurable moral didacticism.

Ferarri died in 1899, Goldoni in 1793. The names men-

tioned in this rapid survey bring us through one hundred years and up to the twentieth century. We have seen the birth of comedy from the *commedia dell' arte*; we have also seen that tragedy took its beginning from classic models; we have seen romanticism push the old débris aside and make for freedom of thought and action. This transition from romanticism to realism was less abrupt in Italy than in other countries. For some time realistic threads had run through the tissue of the romantic plays, and for some time the sheen and color of the romantic played over the dull fabric of realism. It was not so much a process of revolution as of evolution.

GIACOSA: THE LINK BETWEEN THE OLD AND THE NEW

Giuseppe Giacosa (1847-1906) began his literary career after some years spent in the successful practice of law. His first plays were in verse and were historical and romantic; later he became a realist, thus linking the new and the old manner together. He is said to have experimented with every type of drama in vogue in Italy during the last half century. He was touched by many influences and even left one play in the Ibsen manner, *Rights of the Soul*. His changes from romanticism to realism, from realism to the Italian fad known as verism, and on to interpretative realism exemplify the evolution of public opinion during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In his later years he opposed extreme romanticism and the thesis-play. "The stage is not a hospital for diseases of the soul," he declared emphatically.

He interpreted his age, but in all phases was a follower rather than a creator of new things. The influence of Goldoni is one of the most prominent in his work. This versatile dramatist found time to collaborate with Puccini in the librettos of three operas, *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, and *Madame Butterfly*, as well as to write essays and books of travel and edit a magazine. He was also one of the most popular lecturers of his day.

In 1891 he came to the United States in the company of Madame Sarah Bernhardt, who was playing in his *Countess of Challant*, and wrote the usual book of American impressions.

The Game of Chess, the earliest romantic adventure of Giacosa, is still popular with Italian audiences.

The Countess of Challant, written for Madame Bernhardt, is a drama of blood and passion, with the heroine a native of Piedmont, the author's birthplace. *The Stronger* and *Like Falling Leaves* are best known; the latter, which marks the culmination of Giacosa's work, is recommended for study.

STUDY OF *As the Leaves* (*Like Falling Leaves*)

The play is a comedy in four acts. It was published in *The Drama*, February, 1911, and also in *Representative Continental Dramas: Transitional and Revolutionary*.

The theme is a study in social degeneracy. A family kept in luxury lose the power to live usefully. When poverty comes they are like the drifting leaves of autumn.

Gay-colored—no sap, no substance! They cannot resist the storm. At the first whiff they go, they go.

The father is too intent upon making the fortune to remedy the conditions, and after the fortune is gone finds himself helpless to do so. The young wife takes up a new lover; the son cannot summon will-power sufficient to go to work, but idles and gambles; the daughter sees and understands the "crumbling ruins" and determines upon suicide.

Like falling leaves they flutter away.

The play is one of the best examples of the modern social comedy treated with an idealistic realism. The work produces the illusion of life in which situation grows out of situation and the hand of the craftsman is not evident. Note

the strategic point at which the play begins: the reversal of fortune brings out the characteristics of each member of the family. The dialogue is natural, quick, and at times eloquent. Observe the effectiveness of the short last act.

The human sympathy, good nature, and good sense of the dramatist are shown in this example. We are made to sympathize with the frivolous wife, and with the weak son who lives "to incarnate the spirit of beauty," sustained by "the mattress-maker, the upholsterer, the tailor and the tobacco-shop." Giovanni, the father, is a bit weak and unseeing, and Massimo, the self-made nephew, is a bit of a cad at times, but they are all human and are more clearly defined with each act.

The play was presented by the Donald Robertson Company in Chicago in 1898.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

What is the significance of the title, *Like Falling Leaves*?

How are the author's characteristic sympathy and good sense shown in his treatment?

Is there a rising action in the play? Up to what point?

How does the writer show his craftsmanship in the beginning?

Select an instance of dramatic foreshadowing in the play.

Is the dialogue realistic?

Why is this play called an idealistic phase of realism?

What is the probable outcome of Tommy's career? Of Giulia's?

Is the dramatist's real concern with the father and daughter?

Was the happy ending a concession to popular approval or inevitable?

PLAYS AVAILABLE IN TRANSLATION

Like Falling Leaves.

The Stronger.

Sacred Ground.

In single volume with introduction by Edith and Allan Updegraff (Little, Brown & Co.).

Like Falling Leaves, in *Representative Continental Dramas* (Little, Brown & Co.).

As the Leaves, in *Drama*, February, 1911.

The Rights of the Soul, in *Fifty Contemporary One-Act Plays* (D. Appleton & Co.).

The Stronger in Drama, May, 1913.

Magazine Articles

Giuseppe Giacosa, Stanley Astredo Smith, *Drama*, May, 1913.

GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO: THE DRAMA OF DECADENCE

Gabriele d'Annunzio (b. 1863) is undoubtedly the greatest name in modern Italian literature. He is internationally known as poet, novelist, dramatist, orator, archæologist, and aviator. He is a master of the music of speech, both in prose and poetry, with a succession of new and beautiful—ofttimes terrible—images. That he has never been so enthusiastically received by his own countrymen as many a lesser genius is probably because his temperament is not typically Italian. Like most of his countrymen he glorifies the past, but unlike them he is morbid, pessimistic, utterly wanting in humor. He embodies in his drama the dead or dying past rather than the living present and is therefore termed a decadent artist.

A volume of verse, written at sixteen, raised the writer to fame in a day. His next contribution to Italian literature was a novel entitled *Pleasure* in which he works out his peculiar philosophy of purification through pleasure. It may be considered autobiographical, since the hero avails himself of the author's own experiences. Abnormal desire runs through all his plays—incest and adultery, perverted passions, and mutilated figures. They may be called the protest

of pessimism. Beauty is d'Annunzio's religion, beauty at any price. The creation of a work of beauty justifies any suffering; this is the theme of *La Gioconda*.

The first dramatic attempts, *The Dream of a Spring Morning* and *The Dream of an Autumn Sunset*, failed to hold their audience even under the spell of Duse's interpretation of their lyric richness. They are nightmares of lust and romantic passion, exquisitely clothed in a poet's diction. *The Dead City* is one of the most revolting themes, with its blind and neurotic characters infected by the evil vibrations from the tombs of disinterred wickedness. The hero quite unconvincingly purifies himself from his incestuous passion by murdering the innocent sister whom he has wronged in thought. The character of the blind woman, Anna, has been likened to Maeterlinck's Mélisande and Selysette. *The Light under the Bushel* is another revolting theme of lust, cruelty, and horror, with a suicide committed by plunging the arms into a bag of vipers—a new and original method, but not a wholly pleasant one. *The Ship* with its carnage and revenge is poetry rather than drama. Most of the dramas of d'Annunzio are lacking in action; they pause for lyric outbursts and loiter in languid and sensuous scenes.

The three best-known plays, outside Italy, are *La Gioconda*, in which the author asserts the right of the artist, the superman, to create his work of beauty regardless of human ties; *Francesca da Rimini*, a play upon the well-known legend of Paolo and Francesca made immortal by Dante; and *The Daughter of Jorio*, a tragedy of Abruzzi peasant life. In this latter play the pagan and Christian spirits are blended, and d'Annunzio comes nearest to throwing aside his title of "poet of the flesh" and becoming a poet of the spirit.

D'Annunzio has won large fame in other fields, and this he has taken over into the drama. That his reputation as a dramatist should be so great with so few real successes to his credit is a matter for wonder, but it is his magic in the use of words, his strange and exotic beauty of imagery, which make him preëminent in Italian letters. This beauty the

student will not care to miss, although he may marvel and rebel at the horror of the themes upon which these gems are strung.

To sum up the general opinion of his work, this dramatist projects his own moods into his characters and possesses but a few major types; he substitutes words for action; he lacks human sympathy and social consciousness; he utterly lacks humor—but he is a master of words which he uses to depict two phases, only, of life: the beautiful and the horrible. His undoubted genius is for poetry rather than the drama.

The writer is so unwilling that the student should miss either *Francesca da Rimini* or *The Daughter of Jorio* that a brief comment upon each is appended and the pain of selection left to the reader.

STUDY OF *Francesca Da Rimini*

This is a tragedy in five acts, translated by Arthur Symons, with an introduction. (Frederick A. Stokes Co.) It is dedicated to the "Divine Duse." It was first produced by Eleanora Duse and her company at Rome in 1901.

The theme is the love of Francesca for her husband's brother, Paolo. This tale has been a favorite with modern dramatists, notably Stephen Phillips, and Maurice Maeterlinck. The guilty lovers, their struggle, the fatalism of their passion, their death and punishment, are set forth in Dante's vision; and later versions have been content to follow his premises pretty carefully. It is most interesting to compare d'Annunzio's treatment with that of Stephen Phillips and with that of Maeterlinck in *Pelléas and Mélisande*. The lovers of Phillips are youthful, childlike; the intrigue of d'Annunzio's drama occurs ten years after the marriage of Francesca, and both she and Paolo are parents. In Maeterlinck's *Pelléas and Mélisande* the atmosphere is cool, shadowy, filled with plash of mysterious fountains; in d'Annunzio's tragedy it is lurid, with the scent of red roses and the flash

of Greek fire. In the theme of Phillips and of Maeterlinck, Francesca is drawn unwillingly into a guilty love. In that of d'Annunzio she surrenders herself to the man she believes she is to marry and finds herself duped. It contains an admirable reconstruction of the age.

The Francesca of d'Annunzio is a much stronger character than the Francesca of Phillips or the Mélisande of Maeterlinck. In depicting physical beauty and the proud despair of this woman, who passes from maidenhood to marriage, from betrayal to death, the author has surpassed himself. She is not without tenderness; one of the most beautiful passages of the play is the memory of the little sister on the night of her death:

Ah, if she were but here, if she might make
Her little bed beside my bed to-night!
If I might hear again
Her little naked feet run to the window,
If I might hear her run with naked feet,
My little dove, and say to me:
"Francesca, now the morning-star is born,
And it has chased away the Pleiades!"

This passage reveals another side of the woman who played with the Greek fire and held the port-cullis open while the arrows flew past her.

But this dramatist excels in the depiction not only of beauty but of the horrible. In Malatestino, the creeping, cruel third brother, he has given us the incarnation of moral ugliness. This is an innovation in the old theme. Giancotto, the grim crippled husband, is well drawn.

The play is written in irregular verse the changing rhythms of which suggest the rise and fall of passions. One of the most interesting devices in this drama is the use of premonition, of foreshadowing by symbols, over and over again, the coming tragedy. Instances in the first scene are the reference of the Jester to the story of Iseult and Tristan, the watering of the crimson roses with the blood-stained wash of the court, the gift of a crimson rose from Francesca to

Paolo, and the appearance of her brother's wounded face and his cry, in the very words of Giancotto on the fatal night:

Open, Francesca, open!

Francesca has premonitions:

It is life runs away,
Runs away like a river,
Ravening, and yet cannot find its sea.
Bring stillness back to me,
That I may hear again
The bees of May
Beat on the windows, and the cry of swallows.

Note the symbolism of the Greek flame:

So beautiful I am drunk with it. I feel
As if I were in the flame and it in me.

The darkening of the sky by the flight of the swallows and the stumbling of Paolo upon the catch of the trap-door which later held him to his death are other instances of foreshadowing effectively used. One frequently forgets dramatic movement, characterization, and all else in sheer joy of the poetry as in the following passage (the Song of the Spring):

To-day the earth appears
New-wedded like a girl;
The face that the sea wears
To-day is like a pearl.
Hark, hark, is that the merle
Deep in the thicket? Hark,
How swift upsoars the lark into the sky!
The cruel wind goes by, and in his mouth
Bears ravished nests!

There is no room in the heart for aught but love and pity when Francesca says:

Paolo, give me peace!
It is so sweet a thing to live forgetting,
But one hour only, and be no more tossed,
Out of the tempest.

To forget all sorrow that has been
 Yesterday, and shall be
 To-morrow, and so let
 All of my life. . . .
 And all old things in it, far-away things,
 But for one hour, one hour,
 Slip away quietly, a quiet tide,
 Unto the sea.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Discuss the variations which d'Annunzio has made in the theme.

Compare his Francesca with the Francesca of Phillips and with Méliande.

Select instances of dramatic foreshadowing.

Of what is the red rose a symbol? The Greek fire?

Is Giancotto more pathetic than hateful?

Compare Paolo with Pelléas and with the Paolo of Phillips.

Discuss the character of Malatestino.

Comment on the effectiveness of the breaking of the sword on Giancotto's knee.

STUDY OF The Daughter of Jorio

This is a tragedy in three acts. It was translated by Charlotte Porter, Pietro Isola, and Alice Henry and has been published by Little, Brown & Co., and also in *Poet Lore*, 1907.

The theme is a study of peasant life in the land of the Abruzzi, the birthplace of the writer, which he revisited for his material. The real theme of the play is the regeneration of a woman's soul through love. Self-abnegation is the outcome of the struggle. In its spirit this play is essentially Christian, although it goes back and lays hold upon the remotest pagan customs. Because d'Annunzio's work most often speaks of self-gratification and acknowledges no law

above the right of the individual, the daughter of Jorio with her spiritual triumph should not be overlooked.

Note the rising movement in each act, culminating with the terror of the final scene. Note the lyric opportunity of the wedding festivities, the songs of the pilgrims, the prayers and wailing of the mourners. No more effective scene can be imagined than the slow approach of the procession of the penitent to receive the "cup of forgetting." Superstition and savagery mingle with spiritual vision and mystic beauty.

In the character of Ornella, d'Annunzio has given us his tenderest, truest conception of woman. She alone sees and understands the sacrifice of Mila:

Mila, Mila, my sister in Jesus,
I kiss your feet that bear you away!
Heaven is for thee!

If one becomes coldly analytical, as one never should when reading a poetic conception, the character of Mila and its regeneration through love may appear highly improbable; Aligi may be too spiritual and innocent. The best way to appreciate the play is to read it through, allowing it to sweep through the soul with its emotion, questioning nothing, requiring nothing. It then becomes, indeed, a tragedy of exaltation. It was produced first at Milan, where it received an ovation.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

What circumstances inclined the author to treat this theme with especial tenderness?

Study carefully the *Feast of Espousal* and discuss its significance.

What is the superstition of the fireplace?

Comment upon the relation of the parents to their children.

What impression does d'Annunzio give of Mila in the beginning?

Was she hunted purity brought to bay or an evil woman?
How many instances of ill-omen can you find in the play?

Note the mother's lamentation in which she confuses her son and the Saviour.

Did Aligi's opinion of Mila change under his torture, or was it the effect of the drug?

What was the significance of laying the murdered man's head upon the grape-twigs?

What is the symbol of the flame which Mila finds so beautiful?

Did the Italian audience in giving enthusiastic approbation to this play recognize that here at last was the poet of the spirit?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

La Gioconda, translated by Arthur Symons, *Chief Contemporary Dramatists* Vol. II (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Dream of a Spring Morning, translated by Anna Schenck, *Poet Lore*, 1902.

Dream of an Autumn Sunset, translated by Anna Schenck, *Poet Lore*, 1904.

Francesca da Rimini, translated by Arthur Symons (Frederick A. Stokes Co.).

The Daughter of Jorio, translated by Charlotte Porter, Isola Pietro, and Alice Henry (Little, Brown & Co.).

Also in *Representative Continental Dramatists: Transitional and Revolutionary* (Little, Brown & Co.).

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Iconoclasts, James G. Huneker (Charles Scribner's Sons).
Introductions to plays.

Gabriele d'Annunzio's Dramas, Pietro Isola, *Poet Lore*, 1908.

Contemporary Drama of Italy, Lander MacClintock (Little, Brown & Co.).

The Three Francescas, Edith Wharton, *North American Review*, 1902.

THE YOUNGER GENERATION: BRACCO, PIRANDELLO, BENELLI

The temples became theaters; it is now time for the theaters to become temples.

—Francesco Scardaoni.

This term is used by Professor MacClintock to include those outstanding figures who are still living and still producing. Some others may be even now doing creative work which will far surpass these, but by general consent these three, at least, would be named.

Roberto Bracco has had several of his plays presented outside of his own country and is the best-known and most popular prose playwright in Italy at the present moment. Two of the best plays are available in translation, *The Hidden Spring* and *Phantasms*, both studies of the psychology of a woman.

The Italian Jew, Sem Benelli, leads in the poetic drama of his country. He is said to have accomplished that most difficult feat of making the poetic drama dramatic. His two best plays are *The Supper of Jokes* and *The Love of the Three Kings*. The former, under the title of *The Jest*, was produced in America with Messrs. John and Lionel Barrymore in 1919.

Luigi Pirandello, whose *Six Characters in Search of an Author* has won an enviable place in the theater of his own country and in London and New York, is a cynic pointing out the illusions of life. This "comedy in the making," this play within a play, is but one of several in which he treats with whimsical irresponsibility of reality and unreality. Signor Pirandello has sounded in the drama a new note the enduring quality of which cannot at this moment be foretold.

For the passing movement of futurism in Italy and its founder, Marenetti, the student is referred to detailed reference works.

LIST OF PLAYS ILLUSTRATING THE NEWER MOVEMENTS

Phantasms, Roberto Bracco, *Poet Lore*, 1908.

Hidden Spring, Roberto Bracco, *Poet Lore*, 1907.

The Jest, Sem Benelli, excerpts in *Current Opinion*, June, 1919.

Six Characters in Search of an Author, Pirandello.

Henry IV, Pirandello.

Right you Are! Pirandello.

In *Three Plays by Luigi Pirandello* (E. P. Dutton & Co.).

GENERAL REFERENCE

Contemporary Drama of Italy, MacClintock (Little, Brown & Co.).

The Drama in Transition, Isaac Goldberg (D. Appleton & Co.).

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OF MODERN ITALIAN DRAMA

Comment upon the dearth of Italian dramatic expression before the nineteenth century.

What two names of distinction appear before the nineteenth century?

Giacosa, the transition link.

The beauty and the horror of D'Annunzio.

Discuss the quality of literature that warrants the term "decadent"?

Comment upon the sheer beauty of D'Annunzio's words.

Contrast the spiritual import of *The Daughter of Jorio* with the sensual horror of *The Dead City*.

The Futurism of Italy.

Has Pirandello sounded a new note of enduring quality?

ACT FIVE

A SHORT ONE WITH AN INDETERMINATE ENDING ACROSS THE SEA—IN AMERICA

So far from saying that we can have no literature until we have achieved a national type, it would be more true to say that it is precisely at this period that a literature should be expected to come. Art is in demand in periods of preparation, in periods of incompleteness. The service Art renders is that of self-discovery and self-expression. It is therefore precisely to-day that we should be looking for our literature and our drama, because we are in process of preparation, we are seeking and finding.

—*The Case of American Drama*, Thomas H. Dickinson

HAVE WE AN AMERICAN DRAMA?

CRITICS of the drama who have concerned themselves at all about dramatic expression in America have been rather unanimous in the negation of anything approaching a national impulse in the New World. Until the painstaking work of Montrose J. Moses in 1911, there had been no serious attempt to formulate the development of dramatic expression in America. Nothing approaching an average opinion has crystallized about the chaotic expression preceding the twentieth century; much of the work is unpublished, and the whole subject one for the specialist with extensive libraries at his hand. While there has been no national impulse in America corresponding to contemporary movements in England and upon the Continent, there has been remarkable progress during the twentieth century, and especially during the last decade. Here, as elsewhere, we shall be able to segregate a few outstanding names to visualize for us the foundations and the contemporary building.

We have been deprived of one of the richest sources of dramatic lore in other lands—a folk-drama—by the newness and vastness of the land and its constantly changing population, drawn from the four corners of the earth. Hauptmann turned to the peasant farmers of Silesia for an atmosphere almost as unchanging as the hills or the sea; Synge found in the Aran Islands a primitive life rich in suggestion; but the American dramatist finds Swedes in his Western wheatfields, Germans on the farms of the Mississippi Valley, Italians and Russians in the mining-camps and beet-fields of Colorado, and Japanese in the cities and gardens of California. Some critics have maintained that we must wait until all these elements are fused into a national consciousness for the true American Drama. The nearest approach we have to a folk-drama is sectional, as in the plays of Wisconsin village life and of the North Carolina mountain people.

Appreciation of one of our richest dramatic sources, the negro, has been shown recently in the three short plays by Ridgely Torrence and in the three-act drama, *Goat Alley*, by Ernest Howard Culbertson.

To have great plays, there must also be great audiences. Much has been done in the process of educating the American audience in the past ten years. English dramas of sincerity, such as those of Shaw and Galsworthy, are well received where they are given. The support of the Irish Players in American tour and the recent cordial welcome given to the Russian Players are evidences of growing appreciation of serious art. Such organizations as the Theater Guild, the Chicago Fine Arts Theater, The Provincetown Players, and the Dramatic Clubs of the various universities, to mention but a few, are doing much to create an audience meet for a master when he shall come. The Drama League of America is another force for dramatic righteousness, and every serious study-group may claim a share in this preparation for future achievement.

THE FOUNDATIONS: HOWARD, HERNE, FITCH

Previous to 1878, says Mr. Moses, neither actor nor manager risked anything on an American playwright. American invention had not been idle in spite of commercial discrimination, and we have plays of Indian life, of Revolutionary themes, frontier plays, and American caricatures, which are the ancestors of such modern expressions as *The Arrow-Maker* by Mary Austin, *Children of Earth* by Alice Brown, *The Girl of the Golden West* by Belasco, and *The Man from Home* by Tarkington. In the beginning of the last quarter of the nineteenth century there were two types of plays made popular by actors who were specialists in their creation: the Indian play and the Yankee caricature.

Bronson Howard (b. 1842) lived in what was then the extreme West; it was a journey to boast of to go from New York to Detroit. He accepted dramatic convention as he found it in the well-made play of Scribe and Dumas fils. His plays are not of so much importance as the fight which he made in the last twenty years of the century for the recognition of the American playwright. Whether any of his plays survive or not, he merits the title bestowed upon him, Dean of American Drama, for his encouragement of native playwrights and his creation of a local dramatic demand. He died in 1908, leaving about fifteen plays.

James A. Herne (1839-1901) was the first to break away from the melodrama of the early American stage and create something approaching realism. He used the material of every-day life to create tragedies and rural comedies in which there is a keen humor and kindly human sympathy. None of Mr. Herne's plays have been published, but large numbers of people have been privileged to see him in his own *Shore Acres* or in the Dickens rôles which he interpreted so ably. Dignity and beauty of the commonplace might be his text. Let his own words characterize his kindly creed:

I believe that every human being has a certain amount of divinity—just as much as he is capable of holding. And he gives out just as much of that divinity as he is capable of expressing.

Clyde Fitch (1865–1909), because of his early death and the great mass of his work in nearly every known form of drama, may be considered among the early playwrights. There is a great deal of similarity in his plays; they are all romantic in treatment and a Clyde Fitch heroine or hero has become a byword. He knew the life of New York in his day better than other dramatists and frequently wrote his plays to fit a particular actress, as *Captain Jinks*, for Ethel Barrymore, and *The Girl with the Green Eyes* for Clara Bloodgood. He was a great story-teller, and the very quickness and brilliancy of his execution prevented him from more serious accomplishment. He gave to the American stage about fifty plays which have held their audiences for long runs and are not likely to be laid aside for some time to come. His facility in converting everything he saw into drama is absolutely unrivaled in his own land, reminding one of the Spanish fertility of invention.

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF AMERICAN PLAYS

Study-groups may spend a few weeks most profitably and pleasantly in a comparative study of American plays, taking up one from the early period, and then comparing it with a contemporary treatment of the same theme. For this purpose *Representative American Plays*, published by The Century Co., affords the most complete survey of native drama from the beginning up to the present in a single volume. The following list is merely suggestive; others of the period represented may be substituted as they may be available.

The American Type

Jonathan in England, 1828 (French).

The Man from Home, Booth Tarkington, 1900.

The Indian:

Metamora, Stone.

Strongheart, William de Mille (French).

The Arrow-Maker, Mary Austin, 1915 (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Frontier Days and Ways

The Lion of the West, James K. Paulding, 1831.

The Rose of the Rancho, Richard Tully.

Society Plays

Fashion, or Life in New York, Anna Cora Mowatt, 1850 (French). (*Fashion* was revived by Kenneth Macgowan, Robert Edmond Jones, and Eugene O'Neill at the Provincetown Playhouse in 1924.)

The Truth, Clyde Fitch (*Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I).

Rural Plays

Peaceful Valley, Edward E. Kidder (French), played over 5000 times by Sol Russell.

Uncle Jimmy, Zona Gale (B. W. Huebsch).

War Themes

Shenandoah, Bronson Howard.

Secret Service, William Gillette (French).

Mothers of Men, Percival Wilde (Little, Brown & Co.).

The Negro:

The Nigger, Edward Sheldon (Macmillan Co.).

Granny Maumee, Ridgely Torrence.

Goat Alley, Ernest Howard Culbertson (D. Appleton & Co.).

College Atmosphere

The College Widow, George Ade (unpublished but familiar through production).

Brown of Harvard, Rida Johnson Young (French).

*Problem Play (a comparatively recent phase)**The Man of the Hour*, George H. Broadhurst (French).*The Third Degree*, Charles Klein (French).*Play with Religious Motives**The Servant in the House*, Charles Rann Kennedy (English by birth) (Harper).*The Fool*, Channing Pollock (Brentano's).*Character Play**Rip Van Winkle*, Washington Irving (French).*Lightnin'*, Frank Bacon and Winchell Smith (*Current Opinion*, October, 1918).*Poetic Play**Francesca da Rimini*, Boker.*Faust*, Arthur Davison Ficke.

THREE OUTSTANDING NAMES OF THE EARLY CENTURY

The fine attitude toward art, as toward everything else, is to be grateful always for the good and beautiful when it comes, without grudging and doctrinaire complaint that it is not something else.

—*Outline of Literature*, John Drinkwater

William Vaughn Moody

Because William Vaughn Moody died at the early age of forty-one years, in 1910, his work seems to belong to an earlier period than that of Augustus Thomas, who was born ten years earlier. Mr. Moody was poet, dramatist, and teacher, holding a professorship in the University of Chicago at the time of his death. His early death in the prime of his literary activity was a great loss. He is apt to be remembered as a man of one play, *The Great Divide*, which was acclaimed as "the great American drama" upon its first appearance. The recent distinction given it by the French Academy tends to sustain that opinion, although

critics in the interim have delighted to demonstrate that it is both melodramatic and insincere.

In *The Faith-Healer*, produced in 1909, the author was not quite so successful. It is founded upon the career of one Schlaetter, a divine healer, whose miraculous cures and mysterious disappearance are still a matter of recollection in Denver. The dramatic effectiveness is impaired by philosophical speculation.

Those who know and love the rich poetic imagination of *The Masque of Judgment* and *The Fire-Bringer* are inclined to believe that Mr. Moody's gift was poetic rather than dramatic, notwithstanding the success of *The Great Divide*.

Majesty, awe, and terror are inspired by the daring flight of his muse in *The Masque of Judgment*. The angel Raphael broods over the events of the incarnation, the crucifixion, and the last judgment. No bounds of time, space, or opinion limit this wondering soul.

Defenseless amid God's infinitudes,
Bruised by the unshod trample of his hours.

The student of literature cannot afford to miss the lyric beauty of these poetic themes, and the student of the drama will wish to know the important transition play, *The Great Divide*.

STUDY OF *The Great Divide*

This is a play in three acts (*Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I). Its first metropolitan production was in 1906. Henry Miller appeared as Stephen Ghent and Miss Margaret Anglin as Ruth Jordan. In the London performance, in 1909, Miss Edith Wynne Matheson took the rôle of Ruth.

The theme is the conflict between the free unconventional thought of the West and the puritanic ideals of the East. A woman, bought in a drunken brawl, marries her purchaser, learns to love him, but refuses to be happy in the life he builds for her. She insists upon expiation of their guilt and

purification through sacrifice; it was the law of her fathers.

The only way my fathers knew—by wretchedness, self-torture. . . . You have taken the good of our life and grown strong. I have taken the evil and grown weak, weak unto death. . . .

The climax occurs in the first act—an unusual treatment. There is of course a culmination of action in the second and third acts, in the tense emotion of the conversation between Ruth and Stephen. Note that the climax of the first act is that of situation, while in the second and third it is the clash of characters. The improbability of certain incidents weakens the play. It is quite unlikely that the Mexican would have kept the nuggets or been at hand when Ruth could buy them back. It is quite improbable also that she should have become proficient in basket-making and able to buy such a chain with her work where she must compete with the natives in marketing her wares. The happy ending comes rather swiftly after Ruth's passionate resentment of her husband's presence under her mother's roof.

The regeneration of Stephen Ghent under the influence of his love for a good woman is graphically shown. His primitive instinct rises above the situation, and he starts upon a new existence. He is puzzled and confused by Ruth's pain and coldness.

I used to think that when a couple was married, there they were, man and wife, and that was the end of it.

Ruth Jordan is simply an exaggerated type of the romantic idealist. She will wreck her own life and Stephen's and that of her child to follow the path she has marked out for herself.

There are very tense places in the conflict of these two characters. Stephen says:

Does it rankle in your mind that I took you when I could get you, by main strength and fraud? I guess most women are taken that way, if they only knew it. . . . Don't you want to be paid for? I guess

every wife is paid for in some coin or other. . . . And as for you, I've paid for you not only with a trumpery chain but with the heart in my breast.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Is the conflict of the play due to situation, or clash of character, or both?

Where is the culmination of the rising action?

Does the second act sustain the interest?

Which character is most ably drawn?

Is there a psychology of the East and West?

Discuss the dialogue, especially the scenes between Stephen and Ruth.

Do you find any traces of melodrama or unlikely incident?

Is the picture of the West realistic or romantic?

Is the happy ending logical? Does it weaken the play?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

The Great Divide, Chief Contemporary Dramatists, Vol. I.

The Faith Healer.

The Fire-Bringer (Prometheus myth).

The Masque of Judgment.

Published by Houghton Mifflin Co.

Augustus Thomas: Beginning of the Drama of Sincerity

Augustus Thomas has developed with the American drama and illustrates in his work the successive phases through which the popular taste progressed. He wrote *Alabama* and *Arizona* when melodrama was the fashion. The first play was an influence in bringing an end of sectional feeling. *In Mizzoura* is another familiar title of his early period of activity. With the passing of that particular type of play, compounded of melodrama, sentiment, and comedy, Mr. Thomas turned his attention for a time to the making of the farce-

comedies then so popular. Still later he turned to the play of ideas, the play with a definite message which he transmits to the audience too often by direct exposition instead of emotional suggestion. As executive chairman of the Producing Managers' Association he holds a position of considerable influence in theatrical affairs.

As an example of the clever comedy trifles *Mrs. Leffingwell's Boots* may be selected. With *The Witching Hour* the psychology of suggestion is developed. Mr. Thomas states that he kept this play in his desk several years, awaiting a moment when the popular interest in hypnotic suggestion should be strong enough to warrant its appearance. His journalistic training gives him the keen sense of timely interest in production. *As a Man Thinks* is a continuation of the serious drama in which suggestion or the power of the subconscious plays an important part.

STUDY OF *The Witching Hour*

This is in four acts. It is published in *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I.

It was first put on in New York in 1907, with John Mason as Jack Brookfield.

The theme is a study of the power of telepathy and hypnotic control. Jack Brookfield, a professional gambler, finds out through a distinguished judge, interested in mental and psychic phenomena, that he is possessed of telepathic power. He discovers to his dismay that while he has always boasted of playing a straight game he has really known what cards his opponent held. He is forced to stop his games. The affair is further complicated when one of his close associates commits a crime which Jack has been conscious was worked out in his own mind.

Here's the very *hell* of it. Long before Scoville was killed I thought he deserved killing and I thought it could be done just—as—it—was—done. . . . I've always had a considerable influence over that poor devil that's running away to-night, and I'm not sure that before the Judge of both of us the guilt isn't mostly mine.

True to his conviction of Hardmuth's acting under suggestion, Jack helps him to escape. There is an abundance of love interest, suspense, and surprise in the development. Note the minute details of stage-direction.

The structure is better than that of *As a Man Thinks*. It does not talk at the audience so much. It inclines toward melodrama, especially in the scene where Hardmuth is, very improbably, hypnotized swiftly enough to prevent his discharging his revolver. There is artificial contrivance in the old letter and the former love-affair of the judge with the prisoner's grandmother. Note the surprise in the close. The reason for Jack's leniency with the criminal has been carefully concealed, and yet its probability is evident at once from what has gone before.

The gentleman gambler, with his refinement, courage, and culture, is a stock character, his only new phase is the telepathy. Note the careful characterization of Lew Ellinger, the man about town. This type is one of Mr. Thomas's favorites. His superstition, good nature, and utter lack of moral fiber are a contrast to the delicacy of the gambler, which approaches sentimentality. There are some deep truths dropped in the play. "The power that any man or anything has to annoy us we give him or it by our interest," is one; and "every man is ill in some manner who lives habitually on a lower level than the light he sees" is another.

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

Is the theory of telepathy treated scientifically?

Is the law of heredity exemplified in the fear of the cat's-eye true in such detail?

Comment upon the character of Justice Prentice.

Did his investigations border on the psychic as well as upon telepathy?

What is the distinction between psychic and mental investigation?

How many love-stories are there in the plot?

Note that twice our attention is called to the ivory paper-knife on the table.

Did Jack suggest to young Whipple the furnishing of the room?

Did he suggest to Whipple the figure of Viola upon which he comments.

Is the interest sustained to the close by the suspense of Jack's conduct?

Is not the idea that "thoughts are things" in this as well as in the later *As a Man Thinks*?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

In Mizzoura.

Mrs. Leffingwell's Boots.

The Witching Hour.

As a Man Thinks (E. C. Duffield & Co.; also in *Modern American Plays*, Harcourt, Brace & Co.).

Published by Samuel French.

See also autobiography, *The Print of My Remembrance* (Charles Scribner's Sons).

Percy MacKaye

If it is true that to make an artist one must begin with the grandfather, Percy MacKaye (b. 1875) has a good start. His father, Steel MacKaye, was an actor, dramatist, and manager; an enthusiastic follower of Delsarte; founder of a new school of acting; and an experimental wizard in stage effects. He interpreted many rôles, among them that of Hamlet; he left about fifteen plays, which were mostly adaptations; the most familiar title among them is that old favorite of stock companies, *Hazel Kirke* (French). His life was undoubtedly shortened by the failure of his tremendous plan for a spectacle at the Columbian Exposition.

Montrose J. Moses tells that the young Percy, when sixteen, was locked in his room and told to write a Storm Choral for

his father's Columbian Exposition Spectacle before he could come out.

Percy MacKaye is a Harvard man and spent a year in the University of Leipsic and several years in European travel. He taught for a time, was a member of the literary colony at Cornish, New Hampshire, and has held a fellowship at Miami University. A brother is known as a literary critic, and a sister, Miss Hazel MacKaye, has given much time to the promotion of pageantry in America.

Mr. MacKaye's first plays were literary rather than dramatic, although *Jeanne d'Arc* was produced successfully by Sothorn and Marlowe and Bertha Kalich appeared in *Sappho and Phaon*. *Fenris the Wolf* is another poetic drama of the early period. *The Scarecrow* remains his most popular effort, with its fantasy and imagination. *Mater* and *Anti-Matrimony* are bantering comedies, sparkling and cynical, but not bitter. The latter should be compared with Hermann Bahr's *The Concert*. It was produced by Miss Henrietta Crosman. Mr. MacKaye is quite as well known for his books and lectures about the theater as for his plays. He is an enthusiast for community expression through the drama, and through pageantry.

There is no compromise with commercialism in his work; his attitude is very serious toward art and somewhat academic. He has brought to the making of American drama wit, fantasy, a rare subtlety, rich poetic imagination, and high ideals. The name of MacKaye, through the dynamic energy and versatile genius of the father and his devotion to the theater, and through the contribution of his gifted children, will be an enduring one in our American dramatic tradition.

STUDY OF The Scarecrow

This is "a tragedy of the ludicrous" in four acts; it is published in *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I. It was first produced by the Harvard Dramatic Club in 1910. Its New York production was in 1911.

The theme is most simply expressed in the subtitle, "a tragedy of the ludicrous." The source of the legend, *Feathertop* from *Mosses from an Old Manse*, by Hawthorne, should be read and compared; also the introduction to the Macmillan edition of *The Scarecrow*, in which the author explains the difference of treatment. Hawthorne's legend is merely a satire, a clever bit of charlatanism, but the theme of Mr. MacKaye is the sorrow of a heart that finds itself forever isolated from human sympathy because of its ludicrous origin. It is treated sympathetically; Ravensbane enlists our pity. Incidentally he is typical of human absurdity.

And prithee, what's a man? Man's but a mirror,
Wherein the imps and angels play charades,
Make faces, mope, and pull each other's hair—
Till crack! the sly urchin Death shivers the glass,
And the bare coffin boards show underneath.

Observe that the relations of Goody Rickby to the devil, Dickon, and her past relations with Justice Mertoun are revealed without undue artifice and that the first act introduces all the principal characters, even the Scarecrow, who must be created.

How thy natal composites have burst into bloom: the pumpkin in thee to a golden collarette; thy mop of crow's wings to these raven locks; thy broomstick to a lovely limp; thy corn-silk to these lovely tassels. Verily in the gallery of scarecrows, thou art the Apollo Belvidere!

Note the dramatic device of counting the crows. It appears in the first few lines and recurs again and again as if in mockery. The theme grows in pathos and dignity until the end of the ludicrous puppet attains to tragedy.

Compare Dickon with Mephistopheles of the Faust legend. His cynicism, his sneers at all goodness and truth, his constant perversion of all things to his purpose, and his malicious delight in tormenting, all remind of Faust's companion. Note the sly slap at poets:

I am something of a poetaster. Indeed I flatter myself that I have dictated some of the finest lines in literature.

Blacksmith Bess, Dame Rickby, is a coarse and revengeful woman whom the world has treated not too kindly.

You would scrape all the wonder out 'n the world, as I've scraped the meat out 'n my punkin-head yonder! . . . Afore sundown I'll send ye a nut to crack shall make your orthodox jaws ache.

The development of the poor scarecrow figure into human attributes through the awakening of love is the real action of the play. From an empty-headed automaton he breaks away from the tutelage of Dickon and cries in agony,

God, are you here? Dear God, I pray to you, make me to be a man!

He responds to the sunshine of Rachel's presence like a flower:

I grow—I grow—I grow! I am a plant; you give it rain and sun. I am a flower; you give it light and dew; I am a soul, you give it love and speech. I grow.

The scene before the mirror reveals to him his true self and also the depth of misery of which he is now capable. This is the supreme moment of the play.

Mine is the consummation of man—even self-contempt!
Scarecrow—Scarecrow—Scarecrow!

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

In what respects does Lord Ravensbane differ from Hawthorne's Feathertop?

What is the real theme of the play?

Is it an allegory of human life? Is it ever wise to press interpretation?

Discuss the development of the Scarecrow from a man of straw to his final resolution.

Comment upon the scene before the mirror.

Comment upon the depiction of Dickon. Of Justice Mer-
toun. Of Dame Rickby.

Where is the climax of emotion in the play?

Has the author succeeded in creating pity and sympathy
for his ludicrous figure?

Is it truly a tragedy?

Is there something of universal application in the suffering
of the Scarecrow?

Is there a revelation in the closing lines that he had at-
tained a soul through suffering and died—a man?

Was he at the last chimera or hero? Compare Undine,
Rautendelein.

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS AND DRAMATIC ESSAYS

The Scarecrow, 1908, *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*,
Vol. I (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Five One-Act Plays (Yankee Fantasies), 1911 (E. C. Duf-
field & Co.).

To-morrow, a study in eugenics, 1913 (Frederick A. Stokes
Co.).

A Thousand Years Ago (1914).

Poetic Plays: Sappho and Phaon (Macmillan Co.).

Jeanne d'Arc (Macmillan Co.).

The Immigrants, immigration problem, 1915 (B. W.
Huebsch).

The Civic Theater (Kennerley).

The Playhouse and the Play (Macmillan Co.).

This Fine Pretty World (1924) (Macmillan Co.).

POETIC DRAMA IN AMERICA

Do not approach literature, then, from the fact-side, but from the
heart-side. Strike first for what it has in common with yourself. See
in it an outlet, not an inlet.

If you could summon before you the makers of great literature they
would tell you that they found their inspiration not in introductions to
great books, not in learned notes about great books, but in great books

themselves. They found themselves in these books, a voice from within, not a fact from without.

—*What Can Literature Do For Me?* C. Alphonso Smith

Josephine Preston Peabody (Mrs. Lionel Marks)

Mrs. Marks is first of all a poet, but, because of the remarkable success of *The Piper*, she is recognized internationally as one who marks the culmination of the poetic drama in America and ranks among the first in any land. She was educated at Radcliffe and was for some time in the English department at Wellesley; her culture and charm were widely known and admired.

She had written two plays before *The Piper*; *Marlowe*, a study of Elizabethan England, appearing in 1901, and *The Wings* in 1905.

The Piper would probably never have received the recognition it so richly deserved had it not been for the winning of the Stratford prize and its production at the Shakespeare Memorial Theater in 1910. It was received with enthusiasm, not only in its initial performance in the Memorial Theater, which suffered a delay of three months on account of the death of the king, but in the various cities of England where it went on tour. The *Liverpool Post* of October 29, 1910, comments:

Mr. Benson's second week at the Shakespeare Theater has been a triumph for himself and his company, and in particular for Miss Peabody, the author of *The Piper*, which has drawn all Liverpool and been acclaimed a work of genius.

There were fifteen hundred plays submitted, and the fact that the play was written in verse probably was not in its favor. As an illustration of the irony of tardy appreciation, the very American manager who had refused to give *The Piper* production now begged the author for it.

Mrs. Marks has written two other plays since *The Piper*—*The Wolf of Gubbio* and *The Chameleon*—but it is in her books of verse, *The Wayfarers* and *The Singing Man*, and in

The Piper, that her beautiful spirit is most fittingly memorialized.

STUDY OF *The Piper*

The Piper is in four acts and is published in *Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. II.

It was produced at the Shakespeare Memorial Theater opening, Stratford-on-Avon, in 1910; in London in 1911; and at the New Theater in New York by Winthrop Ames, with Edith Wynne Matheson as the Piper.

Mrs. Marks has spiritualized the old legend made immortal in many a fairy-tale and especially visualized in Browning's poem, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. A recent development of the story may be found in *The Children Who Followed the Piper* by Padraic Colum. The inner theme is the supremacy of love—the human love which sets the ties of affection above greed and commercial gain, and the divine love which draws the souls of men to sacrifice.

What are the hearts of children to Hamelin—
While it heaps its money-bags?
Now shall they learn—if money-bags can learn—
What turns the bright world black and the Sun cold,
And what's that creature they call a child!—
And what this winged thing men name a heart.

The first act moves quickly and effectively, and then the action slows, but the interest is sustained. The climax at the end of Act Three, where the will of the Piper surrenders to the unspoken pleading of the Christ, is especially fine. The language is simple and direct; there is little pause for poetic exclamation but many passages containing beautiful imagery, as the following:

In your heart the tumult of young birds,
A nestful of wet wings, and morning-cries,
Throbbing for flight!

The Piper is the spirit of freedom; he cannot breathe and laugh while there are things in cages. He believes in the il-

lusions that live in the eyes of children, symbolized by the rainbow shoes. He believes that he is called upon to avenge the wrongs of the stroller people, who are treated as wastrels and shadows, mere nothing, by the practical people of Hamelin town. His mother he remembers as a stroller:

And she starved and sang;
And like the wind, she wandered, and was cold,
Outside your lighted windows, and fled by,
Storm-hunted, trying to outstrip the snow,
Limping and hiding!—and she fled, and laughed,
And kept me warm and died.

He fights it all out at the wayside shrine with the Lonely Man, and yields.

No, no, I cannot give them all! No, no—
Why wilt Thou ask it?—Let me keep but one.
No, no, I will not. . . .
. . . *Have thy way—I will!*

It is the spiritual struggle of the Piper which glorifies Mrs. Marks' play. Little crippled Jan and his mother add a touch of almost unbearable poignancy to the play. We can bear the dreams of the other children but not that of little Jan. The touch of the lonely dog is very effective. To quote again from an English review:

When the audience leaves the theater, almost every countenance is wet with tears. It is literally to each person as though some great sadness of his own life had been turned into joy.

Is not this the supreme achievement of dramatic art, to make each hearer feel that somehow his own pain has been transmuted into joy?

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

What is a concise statement of the theme?

Compare the Piper of this play with Browning's conception.

Compare his lure with that of the Rat-Wife in *Little Eyolf*.

Compare the little crippled Jan with Eyolf.

Do the poetic elements detract from the dramatic movement?

Where is the conflict brought to its climax?

Discuss the same theme without Jan and his mother.

Just what do they contribute to the whole?

Discuss the artistic effect of the rushing in of the children at the end of the first act and at the close.

OTHER POETIC DRAMATISTS

Other poets in America of high rank have turned to the poetic drama with excellent result: their work is not so well known but may be read with pleasure and profit.

Cale Young Rice, successor to Madison Cawein in Kentucky meadows, has written poetic plays rather steadily. They are distinguished for structure and event rather than power of characterization. Two of the best are *David* and *A Night in Avignon*.

Percy MacKaye, whose work has been commented upon elsewhere, permeates all his work with fine poetic feeling. His latest produced play, *This Fine Pretty World*, is a "drama of noble illiteracy"—a story of Kentucky mountain-folks.

Harry Lee won the prize offered by the Poetry Society of America with his four-act play, *Il Poverello*, the life-drama of St. Francis of Assisi. This play is well worth study because of its characterization of the "little poor man," the "troubadour of God." The death of St. Francis is especially well depicted:

Can it be
Thou art my Sister Death,
Far flown—
From heaven's hills
To set me free?

I will rename thee, Sister,
Thou art she
Whom I have longed for,
Loved,,
The Lady—*Poverty*.

I have not anything
But a cloak—
A staff—
A lute—
And a little song to sing.
I am a Troubadour—
Of love—I sing—
For love—is all—
All—all—
Is love. . . .

Olive Tilford Dargan, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Hermann Hagedorn, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Arthur Davison Ficke, and Mary Austin have experimented with the poetic form more or less successfully.

THE YOUNGER GENERATION

A world always in flux is a world ever in transition; change is the law of life. . . . The past has played altogether too much havoc with eminence for us to feel too sure of our opinions.

After all, it is easy to sit by the ancient fires and sing hymns to the past; but that past is always there for us to return to; it has been appraised, and will be yet again. Even where the deed proves abortive, the spirit of the new is the essence of all living.

—*The Drama of Transition*, Isaac Goldberg.

Eugene O'Neill

Eugene O'Neill (b. 1888) is easily the outstanding figure of the younger dramatists. Like Percy MacKaye, Gilda Varesi, and the younger Guitry, he was born in the theater, making his first appearance in Chicago while his father's company was on tour. James O'Neill accumulated a comfortable fortune at the head of his own company in *Monte Cristo* and then retired to his Connecticut estate. Many and

varied are the tales of the young O'Neill's adventures and escapades, at Princeton and later at sea and in strange ports. He has been actor and journalist; he has known the life of a seaman; he has prospected for gold in Honduras; he has known the enforced leisure of threatened tuberculosis; and all of this experience he has woven into the themes of his plays.

He has produced forty plays, according to a list given by Kenneth Macgowan in *Vanity Fair*, and of these he has ruthlessly destroyed eighteen, preserving twenty-two. He has found his way up to Broadway and general recognition through the productions of the Provincetown Players, whose striking interpretation of *The Emperor Jones* went up to Broadway and then on tour and is generally familiar.

The first published work appeared in 1914, *Thirst, and Other One-Act Plays*. They are somewhat melodramatic but contain the elements which made the later plays distinctive. Ten plays were destroyed in the interim between this volume and the next collection of one-act dramas, *The Moon of the Caribbees*. Published in 1918, it contains that which the writer cared to preserve of the short plays of four years. Then came *Beyond the Horizon* with its realism and promise. It was the first long play to receive production and possessed some very evident faults of technique. The next year (1921) *The Straw*, with its sanatorium setting, reminiscent of Mr. O'Neill's enforced rest, came to the stage. It is not especially important as an illustration of the development of his art. *Diff'rent*, produced the same year, is as remorseless in its way as a study by Strindberg or Hauptmann's *Before Sunrise*. *The Emperor Jones*, *Gold*, *Anna Christie*, and *The Hairy Ape* appeared in quick succession; and Eugene O'Neill, after nearly ten years of experimentation, came into his own; he was hailed as the great American dramatist. There are many who have rivaled him in a single play, but none who can equal the achievement of his five last plays as a whole. He has passed from melodramatic plots to realism, and from realism to expressionism; not the incoherent expressionism of the Germans, nor the grotesques of the Italians nor yet the mono-

drama of the Russians, but something that elusively suggests all three and is distinctly Mr. O'Neill's own. The student will wish to know many of these plays, but for the purpose of analysis perhaps *The Emperor Jones* will do as well as another.

STUDY OF *The Emperor Jones*

The play is in eight scenes and was first produced by the Provincetown Players. The original production was taken on tour with Charles Gilpin, the colored actor, in the title rôle.

The theme is a study of the psychology of fear. A burly negro, wanted for murder in the States, escapes as a stowaway to a mythical West Indian island, where by impudence and a sort of unscrupulous business knowledge that he has picked up when Pullman porter, he makes himself emperor in two years.

Ain't a man's talkin' big what makes him big—long as he makes folks believe it? . . . From stowaway to emperor in two years! Dat's goin' some! . . . Dere's little stealin' like you does, and dere's big stealin' like I does. For de little stealin' dey gits you in jail soon or late. For de big stealin' dey makes you emperor. . . . If dey's one thing I learns in ten years on de Pullman ca's listenin' to de white quality talk, it's dat same fact.

The story of the silver bullet is most effective, as is its use in the end. The beat of the tom-tom starts the note of fear in the first act, and it increases throughout.

The structure is that of a single act, with eight scenes; all but the first and last are monologues. Only four speaking characters are used in the entire play. The constantly accelerated beat of the approaching tom-tom strains the nerves of the audience to the breaking-point. In the Provincetown production the lights are never turned on in the theater after the play opens, and no applause is permitted. In the first scene we are told most economically all that it is necessary to know: why Jones is there, his murder of Jeff and the guard, the very good reason the natives have for hating him, and the

story of the bullet—the silver bullet—we are certain that his death will come by a silver bullet. The broken monologue after the man's spirit is broken by fear should be carefully studied. Note how much of the action is embodied in the stage-directions. Recall O'Neill's use of recurring sounds in other plays, the scream of the whistle in the fog in *Bound East for Cardiff* and the cough in *The Web*.

Jones, brutal though he is, wins the sympathy of the audience with his audacity and courage; his intelligence is far above that of the cringing Smithers.

A man can't take de pot on a bob-tailed flush all de time. Was I sayin' I'd sit in six months mo'? Well, I'se changed my mind. . . . When I knows de game's up I kisses it good-bye widout no long waits. . . .

Dis baby plays out his string to de end an' when he quits, he quits wid a bang de way he ought. Silver bullet ain't none too good fer him when he go—an' dat a fact!

The superstition which he thought dead within him rises in the terror of the forest and the maddening drum, and conjures up scenes of horror to haunt him. His courage never really rises after he fails to find the hidden "grub." From then on, convinced that his boasted luck has left him, he is in a panic, running, falling, spending his last bullet—the silver bullet—until he stumbles back in a circle to his starting-place and the silver bullets of his enemies.

Smithers is adequately characterized in a single sentence of stage-description: "His expression is one of unscrupulous meanness, cowardly and dangerous." He pays unconscious tribute to the dead emperor:

Gawd blimey, but yer died in the 'eighth of style, anyhow!

Through the terrors of the forest, the negro reverts to the primitive. He forgets his years of imitation and repression. They drop from him like a veil. Charles Gilpin, who interpreted the part so wonderfully, was running an elevator when the play was being written.

Of the allegory S. P. B. Mais says: "Each member of the audience may apply it as he likes. He cannot escape the sense of universality in it. It has something of the *Everyman* spirit pervading it. We all try putting a bluff over on life, we have extraordinary, quite undeserved success, we bid higher stakes, stay at the tables a little too long, suddenly panic, and then run in circles to avoid the inevitable."

QUESTIONS ON THE PLAY

What is original and new in the technique of this play?

Have you read Conrad's *Nigger of the Narcissus*? If so is there any reminder of it in this?

What other modern plays deal with the psychology of fear?

Discuss the dramatic effectiveness of reiterated sound in this and other of Mr. O'Neill's plays.

Compare with the chant of the low-born in Lord Dunsany's *King Argimenes and the Unknown Warrior*.

Would the introduction of more characters weaken the treatment?

Does it impress you as an allegory of human life?

LIST OF SELECTED PLAYS

Thirst, and Other One-Act Plays (1914) (Gorham Press).

The Moon of the Caribbees (1918).

The Emperor Jones (1921) (Boni & Liveright).

The Hairy Ape.

Anna Christie, in one volume with *The First Man* (Boni & Liveright).

Magazine References

The Works of Eugene O'Neill, Oliver Sayler, *The Drama*, March, 1921.

The Development of Eugene O'Neill, Ludwig Lewisohn, *The Nation*, March 22, 1922.

Eugene O'Neill, Pierre Loving, *The Bookman*, August, 1921.

Susan Glaspell and the Vogue of the One-Act Play

Susan Glaspell (Mrs. George Cram Cook) is mentioned most often along with Eugène O'Neill as a leader of the younger school. She is a native of Iowa, was graduated at Drake University, was, for a time, legislative reporter for Des Moines newspapers, and, with her husband was connected with the Provincetown Players. She collaborated with George Cram Cook in several plays. Although Mrs. Cook has written a few long plays, her reputation has been achieved by the one-act dramas. She is almost everything that Mr. O'Neill is not. He is somber, without humor; Miss Glaspell (as she is better known in the dramatic world) has an ironic humor which gives to her plays their characteristic flavor. O'Neill deals with primitive people, like Emperor Jones or his white prototype, the Hairy Ape—primitive people in violent and melodramatic situation. Miss Glaspell deals with sophisticated people who battle with ideas; she deals with abstractions; her characters are forever groping intellectually. The following passage from *The Verge*, is an illustration of their state of mind:

You think life can't break up and go outside what it was? Because you've gone dead in the form in which you found yourself, you think that all there is to the whole adventure? And that is called sanity—And made a virtue—to lock one in. You never worked with things that grow! Things that take a sporting chance—go mad—that sanity may n't lock them in—from life untouched—from life that waits.

This sort of speculation gives to her longer plays a vagueness and incoherency. It is by her wholly satisfactory *Trifles* and that delightful caricature of Freudian philosophy, *Suppressed Desires*, that she continues to be best known.

The vogue of the one-act play is one of the most significant things of the contemporary movement. While the one-act play has been used as a curtain-raiser and as a feature of vaudeville programs for some time both in England and on the Continent, it has remained for America with her Little

Theaters and University Clubs to afford the fullest opportunity to this sort of play. In consequence there has been a great impulse to the creation of short plays, an impulse in which women have had rather the larger share. The work produced is not only generous in quantity but will bear comparison with the best of the contemporary work, not excluding Dunsany and Maeterlinck, Barrie and Shaw, Synge, Schnitzler, Benavente, and Tagore.

The student is recommended to select from the following list of one-act plays by American playwrights as many illustrations as time affords, and to compare them with the same form from dramatists of other lands, forming his own conclusion as to their relative merit.

SELECTED LIST OF ONE-ACT PLAYS

Mrs. Pat and the Law, Mary Aldis (E. C. Duffield & Co.).

Joint Owners in Spain, Alice Brown (Macmillan Co.; Walter H. Baker).

War Brides, Marion Craig Wentworth (Century Co.).

- *The Neighbors*, Zona Gale, in *Wisconsin Plays* (B. W. Huebsch).

Overtones, Alice Gerstenberg, in *Ten One-Act Plays* (Brentano's).

- *The Pot Boiler*, Alice Gerstenberg, in *Ten One-Act plays* (Brentano's).

- *Trifles*, Susan Glaspell, in *Plays* (Small, Maynard & Co.).

- *Suppressed Desires*, Susan Glaspell and George Cram Cook (Small, Maynard & Co.).

- *The Florist Shop*, Winifred Hawkrigde, in *Plays of the Harvard Dramatic Club*, Vol. I (Brentano's).

- *The Terrible Meek*, Charles Rann Kennedy (English by birth but American by right of many years' residence) (Harper & Brothers).

Chuck, Percy MacKaye, in *Yankee Fantasies* (E. C. Duffield & Co.).

Short Plays, Mary Macmillan (D. Appleton & Co.).

The Woman Intervenes, J. Hartley Manners (Samuel French).

Three Welsh Plays, Jeannette Marks (Little, Brown & Co.).

Embers, George Middleton, in volume of plays (Henry Holt & Co.).

Two Slatterns and a King, Edna St. Vincent Millay (D. Appleton & Co.).

Two Blind Beggars and One Less Blind, Philip Moeller (E. Arens).

Two volumes of short plays: *Thirst* and *The Moon of the Caribbees*, O'Neill (Boni & Liveright).

The God of the Newly Rich Wool Merchant, David Pinski (B. W. Huebsch).

Beauty and the Jacobin, Booth Tarkington (Harper Brothers).

— *Six Who Pass While the Lentils Boil*, Stuart Walker (D. Appleton & Co.).

The Finger of God, Percival Wilde, In *Dawn and Other One-Act Plays* (Little, Brown & Co.).

Dawn, Percival Wilde, In *Dawn and Other One-Act Plays* (Little, Brown & Co.).

See *The Drama*, a monthly magazine, published in Chicago, for many of the current plays.

ANTHOLOGIES OF AMERICAN ONE-ACT PLAYS

Plays of the Harvard Dramatic Club, edited by George Pierce Baker (Brentano's).

Plays of the 47 Workshop, George Pierce Baker (Brentano's).

Provincetown Plays, George Cram Cook and Frank Shay (D. Appleton & Co.).

Washington Square Plays (Doubleday, Page & Co.).

Carolina Folk-Plays, edited by Frederick H. Koch (Henry Holt & Co.).

Representative One-Act Plays by American Authors, Margaret Mayorga (Little, Brown & Co.).

Wisconsin Plays, edited by Thomas H. Dickinson (B. W. Huebsch).

ANTHOLOGIES TO BE CONSULTED FOR COMPARISON

Representative One-Act Plays by British and Irish Authors, Barrett H. Clark (Little, Brown & Co.).

Representative One-Act Plays by Continental Authors, Montrose J. Moses (Little, Brown & Co.).

Fifty Contemporary One-Act Plays, Shay and Loving (D. Appleton & Co.).

Other Contemporary American Dramatists

There are many other American dramatists who should be mentioned, some for the distinction of a single unusual play, as Louis Anspacher's *Unchastened Woman*; others for steady and successful production, as David Belasco. Still others have been acclaimed by the theater-going public; they have produced that elusive and not necessarily inartistic creation known as "a popular success." Still others have been so fortunate as to win prizes which tended to set them apart in public opinion from the commonplace. We must avoid the issue by appending a list of contemporary plays which, in one of these ways or another, have challenged attention, and bid the reader make his own selection. We have attempted to make this list represent average opinion, neither "popular" nor high-brow, and here, as elsewhere where selection has been necessary, a score of nearly as great have been passed regretfully by. Future judgment may rank some of those omitted higher than those included.

A FEW REPRESENTATIVE CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN PLAYS

Romance, Edward Sheldon, with Doris Keane as interpreter (Macmillan Co.).

The Return of Peter Grimm, David Belasco, acted by Warfield (Harcourt, Brace & Co.).

Children of Earth, Alice Brown (Macmillan Co.), \$10,000 prize play.

Bought and Paid For, George Broadhurst (Samuel French), melodramatic.

The Third Degree, Charles Klein (Samuel French).

Kindling, Charles Kenyon (Doubleday, Page & Co.).

The Unchastened Woman, Louis Anspacher (Frederick A. Stokes Co.).

A Man's World, Rachel Crothers (Richard G. Badger).

Miss Lulu Bett, Zona Gale (D. Appleton & Co.), Pulitzer Prize, 1920.

Ice Bound, Owen Davis (Little, Brown & Co.), Pulitzer Prize, 1922.

Nowadays and The Road Together, George Middleton (Henry Holt & Co.).

The First Year, Frank Craven (excerpts in *Current Opinion*, March, 1921).

You and I, Philip Barry (Brentano's), Harvard drama prize, 1922.

The Easiest Way, Eugene Walter (*Chief Contemporary Dramatists*, Vol. I).

Dulcy and Beggar on Horseback, George S. Kaufmann and Marc Connelly.

Dulcy (G. P. Putnam's Sons, also Samuel French).

Beggar on Horseback (Boni & Liveright).

Hell Bent fer Heaven, Hatcher Hughes (Harper & Brothers), Pulitzer Prize, 1923.

GENERAL REFERENCE WORKS ON THE AMERICAN DRAMA

Representative American Plays, edited by Arthur Hobson Quinn (Century Co.).

The Case of American Drama, Thomas H. Dickinson (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

British and American Drama of To-day, Barrett H. Clark (D. Appleton & Co.).

The New American Drama, Richard Burton (Thomas Y. Crowell & Co.).

The Changing Drama, Archibald Henderson (D. Appleton & Co.).

The Theater of To-morrow, Kenneth Macgowan (Boni & Liveright).

Our American Theater, Oliver Sayler (Brentano's).

The American Dramatist, Montrose J. Moses (Little, Brown & Co.).

Chapter on the United States, *Drama in Transition*, Isaac Goldberg (D. Appleton & Co.).

Contemporary American Plays, Arthur Hobson Quinn (Charles Scribner's Sons).

Modern American Plays, George P. Baker (Harcourt, Brace & Co.).

Bulletins of the Drama League of America, 59 East Van Buren Street, Chicago.

Files of *The Drama*, *Theater Magazine*, and *The Bookman*.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OF AMERICAN DRAMA

Have we a folk-drama? Discuss the Indian and negro plays and the plays of the Carolina mountains.

Comment upon the educational influence of the Drama League, the University Dramatic Clubs, and Little Theaters.

Characterization and caricature in the American drama.

The revival of *Fashion* by Anna Cora Mowatt at the Provincetown Playhouse in 1924.

Famous interpreters of early American drama.

American managers.

The vogue of the one-act play.

The Little Theater movement in America.

Poetic drama in the New World.

Burlesque and satire as exemplified in the work of Philip Moeller, George S. Kaufmann, and Marc Connelly.

Modern melodrama and well-made plays. Illustrate.

The American audience.

Who is to blame for the bad plays? Does the responsibility lie with the playwright, with the manager, or with the audience?

SUMMARY

There are certain methods of procedure which must be modified if we are to have a true dramatic impulse. The American public goes to see a favorite actor rather than the play. The star system, with its over-emphasis upon a single part, is not conducive to artistic creation. Then, too, our craze for the new and sensational is inimical to art. Scores of plays are written, cater to popular taste, run in New York as long as they can, and then go on the road for a season or two before being shelved. They are never considered as enduring literature or enduring dramatic art. They are "popular successes," making money for their authors and managers; and this is America and money talks!

But the real dramatist for whom we are looking with our lantern in broad daylight must be something more than a popular playwright. He must be able to put into his work something that a writer of another country, although using the same language, would be utterly unable to express, the reaction of this struggling, striving America in the making.

Our dramatist of the future will discover that America is more than any of her little, standardized towns, more than any of her bold, laughing cities. Over all the throbbing industry, under all the triviality and false-face, through all the sordidness of her commonplace striving, pulses this subtle something which is the spirit of America; and our real dramatist will find it. He will need the keen observation of

the naturalist, the uncompromising courage of the realist, and above all the poetic fancy which shall be able to transmute the crude elements into "the liliated loveliness of a ring." The dramatist whom America awaits must be a "realist of the spirit."

There must be many forerunners for every master, to prepare the way for acceptance of his message, and some of them must die in obscurity and want. May America's sacrifice be small and her Interpreter not long delayed!

OVERHEARD IN THE AUDIENCE AFTER THE CURTAIN DROPPED

SOME ONE WHO WAS BORED: What an interminable play!

SOME ONE WHO DOES NOT UNDERSTAND: What a queer ending!

SOME ONE WHO WAS BORED: Anti-climax, I'll say—

SOME ONE WHO WAS INTERESTED: I wanted Drama to come out again. I loved her in the first act and I really thought she was getting the best of old Commercialism in the third, did n't you?

SOME ONE WHO DOES NOT UNDERSTAND: I think he killed her behind the scenes—strangled her—

SOME ONE WHO WAS INTERESTED: Oh, I don't—but I do think the curtain should have fallen at the end of Act Four. This last act does n't seem to have much connection with the rest and could be dropped without hurting the play in the least.

SOME ONE WHO DOES NOT UNDERSTAND: I like a happy ending. I wanted Drama to marry Commercialism and be done with the wrangling.

SOME ONE WHO WAS INTERESTED: Oh, but there was Art—

SOME ONE WHO WAS BORED: An effete Art, I should say; and Drama herself was n't up to par to-night.

SOME ONE WHO DOES N'T UNDERSTAND: I loved that funny old Expressionism with his queer colors; he was very quaint.

THE JANITOR turns off the lights, and ECHO sadly whispers an old tune:

Drama is dead. The high sweet strain
From Avon ne'er shall sound again.
Enamored of new forms the old give way—
What is before us who shall say?

ADDENDA

PREPARED ESPECIALLY FOR THE USE OF WOMEN'S CLUBS

SUGGESTED PROGRAMS COVERING DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAMA

THE following outline, built upon the preceding text, is suggestive merely, covering in one year's study the development of the drama up to the modern movements. Such a survey must be superficial, of necessity; a year's study might very profitably be given to each of the three great episodes.

Probably most study-groups err in making their programs too full. The mind can absorb new material up to a certain point; beyond that point satiety and boredom are the invariable consequences. Many study-groups emphasize unduly the music upon a program; the necessary formal opening and the music consume the precious time which should be given to the study—if the study is the important thing. This may be obviated by correlating the music with the program and creating an atmosphere, thus leading up to the day's dramatic thought as to a climax.

The usual method of handling the topics of the day's study is by oral report by those who have not only studied the text but undertaken a wider supplementary reading than most members care to do, thus bringing a broader knowledge to the topic. Ten minutes by one thoroughly familiar with her subject should be sufficient for a single report. That program is most successful which calls out the thought of most members. Informal discussion should be given a place following each program, using the topics in the text after each subject or others suggested by the leader. No one can pre-

sent a worth-while opinion who has not read for herself the topics under discussion. No amount of capable leadership will compensate for lack of faithful work by individual members.

In any study of the drama the plays must be read, produced, if possible, or read aloud. One study-group which the writer knows has met fortnightly, during the club-year, for two seasons to read plays. The parts are assigned two weeks in advance, and several rehearsals take place. There is a director for each reading who selects the plays, assigns the parts, and supervises the rehearsals. Many very creditable readings have been given to large and interested audiences. Best of all, every member of that group knows all the plays intimately.

FIRST YEAR'S STUDY

DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAMA

I. Origin of the Drama

Music: Interpretation of Dramatic Songs of the North
American Indians by Thurlow Lieurance

By Weeping Waters

The Year of Dry Leaves

The Owl's Bleak Cry.

Primitive Dramatic Expression

Relation of Mythology to Ancient Drama

Ballad-Dances (illustrated, if possible)

The Place of the Drama among the Arts

Informal Discussion

II. Greek Tragedy

Music: *O Harp Immortal*, Aria from *Sappho*, Gounod

Hymn to Apollo

Dramatic Motives of the Greeks

The Three Unities

The Greek Theater and Modern Adaptations

The Three Masters of Greek Tragedy

Presentation of *Polyxena*, adapted from *Hecuba* of Euripides
by Samuel Eliot, Jr. *Little Theater Classics*, Vol. I
(If entire play is given, the above topics must be omitted
in part.)

III. Greek Comedy

Music: *The Nightingale's Passion Song*, from the *Hippolyte*

Aristophanes as a Feminist

Aristophanes as a Literary Critic

Aristophanes as a Poet

Reading of *The Frogs*

IV. Hebrew Dramatic Expression

Music: *I Know That My Redeemer Liveth*, Handel

The Cry of Rachel, Reese-Salter

Study of the Book of Job—Authorship and Date

The Dramatic Movement

Job: A Study in Friendship

Job: The Complaint of the Human Soul

Selected Readings to Exemplify Lyrical Beauty

V. Drama of the Middle Ages

Music: *Ave Maria*, Gounod

The Mysteries and Miracles

Illustrations in Pantomime from *Noah's Flood*

The Story of *Everyman*

Medieval Farces and Interludes

Production of *The Wandering Scholar from Paradise*, Hans
Sachs, *Little Theater Classics*, Vol. V.

VI. *Elizabethan Drama*

Music: *Come Live with Me and Be My Love*, Marlowe
Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes, Ben Jonson

Shakespeare's Predecessors

English Theaters and Audiences

Marlowe's Contribution to the Drama

Selected Readings from *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern*, Alfred
 Noyes

VII. *Elizabethan Drama, Continued*

Music: Songs from Shakespeare

O Willow, Willow, from *Othello*

Who Is Sylvia, from *Two Gentlemen of Verona*

Hark, Hark! the Lark, from *Cymbeline*

The Humor of Shakespeare

The Women of Shakespeare's Plays

His Great Tragedies

Discussion of *Lear* or *Hamlet*

VIII. *Early Drama of Spain*

Music: Selections from *Carmen*, Bizet

Spanish National Life in the Seventeenth Century

Spanish Transitions from the Medieval

The Contribution of Cervantes and Lope de Vega

Calderón: Soldier, Priest, Poet

Reading and discussion of *Life is a Dream* (requires cutting)

IX. *National Drama of France*

Music: French National Airs

Selections from the Opera *Le Cid*, Massenet, based
 upon Corneille's Tragedy

French Theaters of the Seventeenth Century

Corneille's Contribution to the Drama

Racine

The Comedy of Molière

Reading from *Cyrano de Bergerac* of the Setting and a Portion of the First Scene—admirable description of theater of the seventeenth century

X. French Drama, Concluded

Music: Selections from *Manon*, Massenet, adapted from Abbé Prévost

Selections from *La Traviata*, Verdi, adapted from Dumas

Production of *The Affected Young Ladies*, Molière (Baker)

XI. German National Drama

Music: *Procession of the Knights of the Holy Grail*, from *Parsifal*, Wagner *Pilgrim's Chorus*, from *Tannhäuser*, Wagner

The Revolt of Lessing against Tradition

The Friendship of Goethe and Schiller

Goethe: Dramatist and Poet

The Faust Legend: Marlowe's Treatment

XII. German National Drama, Concluded

Music: Selections from Gounod's Opera, *Faust*

Reading and discussion of *Faust*, Parts One and Two, under Leader (this may take the form of a lecture-recital)

XIII. English Transitions

Music: Selections from *Samson and Delilah*, Handel, adapted from Milton's *Samson Agonistes*

Milton's Contribution to the Drama

Dryden and the Classical School

Restoration Comedy

Contrast English life in the Puritan Age and during the Restoration

XIV. *English Transitions, Concluded*

Music: Overture from *Midsummer Night's Dream*

Outdoor Presentation of Milton's *Masque of Comus* (Baker)

XV. *Eighteenth Century Drama*

Music: Selections from *Robin Hood*, Reginald de Koven
Oh, Promise Me
The Tinkers' Chorus

Culmination of English Drama under Goldsmith and Sheridan

Glimpses of Italy, France, and Spain

Selected Readings from *She Stoops to Conquer*

Conclusions Based upon the Year's Work—informal discussion

Note: The usual number of bimonthly meetings is about eighteen. Two meetings have been allowed for special programs of local interest.

SECOND YEAR'S STUDY

MODERN DRAMA

SCANDINAVIA, RUSSIA, FRANCE, GERMANY, SPAIN

I. *Scandinavian Drama*

Music: National Hymn of Norway
 Norwegian Echo Song

The Scandinavian Theater of Ideas

The Romantic Phase of Ibsen's Literary Activity

Group Reading: *Peer Gynt* (Must be cut)

Brief Résumé of the Philosophy of *Brand*

II. *Scandinavian Drama, Continued*

Music: Selections from the *Peer Gynt Suite*, Grieg:
Morning Song

Death of Ase

Ibsen as Social Reformer

Discussion of *The Pillars of Society*, *An Enemy of the People*

Ibsen as a Feminist

Discussion of *A Doll's House*, *Ghosts*

III. *Scandinavian Drama, Continued*

Music: Selections from the *Peer Gynt Suite*, Grieg:
Anitra's Dance

In the Hall of the Mountain King

Ibsen's Individualism

Report upon John Gabriel Borkman

The Symbolism of Ibsen's Later Life

Illustrate from *The Master Builder*; *When We Dead Awaken*

IV. *Scandinavian Drama, Concluded*

Music: *The Viking Song*

Selections from *The Flying Dutchman*

The Social Drama of Björnson

Discussion of *Beyond Human Power*

The Naturalism of Strindberg

Discussion of *The Father*

Contrasts in the Characterization of Women by the Three
Scandinavian Dramatists

V. *Russian Drama*

Music: Russian Folk-Songs

The Sea-Gull's Cry

Stormy Breezes

The Water-Wheel

The Forerunners of Russian Realism
 The Influence of Pushkin and Gogol
 The International Influence of Tolstoy
 Reading: *The Power of Darkness*

VI. *Russian Drama, Continued*

Music: Selections from *Prince Igor*
 Tchekov and the Moscow Art Theater
 The Russian Invasion of America
 Reading and Discussion of *The Cherry Orchard*

VII. *Russian Drama, Concluded*

Music: Selections from *The Snow Maiden* Text by Ostrovsky music by Rimsky-Korsakoff
 The Drama of Human Destiny: Andreyev
 Group Reading or Production of *The Life of Man*

VIII. *French Realism*

Music: Selections from *Rigoletto*, Verdi; *Le Roi s'Amuse*, Hugo
 The Forerunners: Zola, the Goncourt Brothers, De Maupassant, Becque
 The Thesis-Play: Eugene Brieux
 The Play of Moral Ideas: Paul Hervieu
 Discussion of *The Red Robe*, *Damaged Goods*, *Know Thyself*

IX. *French Romanticism*

Music: Selections from *Monna Vanna*, Maeterlinck (music by Henry Fevrier), or *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Debussy
 Maurice Maeterlinck: Poet, Mystic, Dramatist
 The Symbolism of Maeterlinck
 Illustrated by readings from *Pelléas and Mélisande*
 Group Reading or Production of *The Intruder*

X. *French Romanticism, Concluded*

Music: Selections from *Suzanne's Secret*, Wolf-Ferrari
 Edmond Rostand as an Exponent of the French Spirit
 Maude Adams as L'Aiglon and Chantecler
 Historical Foundation of *Cyrano de Bergerac*
 Readings from *Chantecler* or *Cyrano de Bergerac*
 General Discussion

XI. *Modern Drama of Germany*

Music: Selections from *Le Prophète*, Meyerbeer
 The Dual Art of Hauptmann
 Discuss the Realism of Hauptmann—
 Illustration: *Rose Bernd*
 Neo-Romanticism: *The Sunken Bell*
 Readings from *The Sunken Bell*

XII. *Modern Drama of Germany, Continued*

Music: Selections from *The Tales of Hoffmann*, music by
 Offenbach
 The Drama of Compromise: Sudermann
 Discussion of *The Vale of Content*; *The Joy of Living*
 The Viennese Dramatists: Bahr, von Hofmannsthal,
 Schnitzler
 Comparison of the Treatment of the Artistic Temperament by
 Bahr and Schnitzler and by Ibsen.
 Reading of *The Concert*, Bahr; or *The Lonely Way* or *Intermezzo*, Schnitzler

XIII. *Modern Drama of Germany, Concluded*

Music: *The Magic Fire Spell*, Wagner; *Ride of the Valkyries*, Wagner
 The New School of Expressionism
 Franz Molnar, Karel Capek, Georg Kaiser

Reading of *Liliom*, *R.U.R.*, or *From Morn till Midnight*

XIV. *The Spanish Revival*

Music: *La Paloma* (*The Dove*) Yradier

Selections from *Ernani*, Verdi

Echegaray and Benavente

Group Reading: *The Great Galeoto*, or *Bonds of Interest*;
or, Production of *The Women's Town*, the Quinteros

XV. *Italian Impulses*

Music: Selections from *Jewels of the Madonna*, Wolf-Ferrari

The Poetry of D'Annunzio

Illustrate with readings from *Francesca da Rimini* and *The Daughter of Jorio*

The Decadence of D'Annunzio

Illustrate from *The Dead City*

The New Movement in Italy: Pirandello

Discuss *Six Characters in Search of an Author*

THIRD YEAR'S STUDY

MODERN DRAMA

ENGLAND, IRELAND, AMERICA

I. *Backgrounds of the Nineteenth Century*

Music: Songs from Tennyson

Sweet and Low

Come into the Garden, Maud

Crossing the Bar

The Rule of Poetry in the Early Years

Religious Speculation of the Nineteenth Century

Great Poets Who Used the Dramatic Form: Shelley and
Tennyson

Discussion of *The Cenci* and *Becket*
Illustrative Readings

II. *Backgrounds of the Nineteenth Century, Continued*

Music: Songs from Browning
The Year's at the Spring
Ah, Love but a Day

The Dramatic Novelists

Establishment of Free Theaters

The Closet Drama

Great Poets Who Used the Dramatic Form, Concluded:
Byron and Browning

Discussion of *The Blot on the 'Scutcheon* and *Manfred*

III. *The English Renaissance*

Music: Group of English Songs
Love's Old Sweet Song
The Lass of Richmond Hill
Twickenham Ferry

The Drama of Conversation: Oscar Wilde

Discussion of the Dialogue of Wilde: Its Antitheses, Its
Inconsequence

Pinero's Women: Types: Zoe Blundell and Mrs. Tanqueray

The Contribution of Henry Arthur Jones

Discussion of *Michael and His Lost Angel*

IV. *The English Renaissance, Continued*

Music: Selections from *The Chocolate Soldier*, Oscar Straus,
adapted from Shaw's *Arms and the Man*

The Amazing Versatility of George Bernard Shaw

His Satire and Social Rebuke

His Characterization of Women: Discuss *Candida*

His Recent Work: Discuss *Saint Joan*

The Serious Art of Galsworthy: Discuss *Strife* or *Justice*

V. *The English Renaissance, Continued*

Music: Overture from *Oberon*, Weber

The Charm That Is Barrie

Contradictory Critical Comments

Maude Adams as Peter Pan

Group Reading: *A Kiss for Cinderella* or *Dear Brutus*

VI. *The English Renaissance, Concluded*

Music: Overture to *Martha*; English setting, music by Flotow

The Intellectual Drama: Granville Barker

The Independent Theater

The Place of Stephen Phillips in the Poetic Drama

Illustrative Readings

Some Contemporary English Playwrights: Arnold Bennett,
A. A. Milne, Sutton Vane

Discussion of *Outward Bound*

VII. *The Irish Impulse*

Music: Irish Melodies, Sir Thomas Moore

Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms.

The Last Rose of Summer

The Harp That Once Through Tara's Halls

The Abbey Theater

The Dramatic Enthusiasms of Lady Gregory

The Deirdre Legend in Irish Drama

Group Reading: *The Workhouse Ward* or *Spreading the News*

VIII. *The Irish Impulse, Continued*

Music: *Kathleen Mavourneen*

The Low-Backed Car

My Wild Irish Rose

William Butler Yeats; Poet, Mystic, Philosopher

Comparison of Yeats and Maeterlinck

Production of *The Land of Heart's Desire* or Group Reading
of *The Hour-Glass*

IX. *The Irish Impulse, Continued*

Music: *Wearing of the Green*

Come Back to Erin

Where the River Shannon Flows

The Drama of Peasant Life: J. M. Synge

Brief Résumé of Synge's Life and Work

Production of *Riders to the Sea*

X. *The Irish Impulse, Concluded*

Music: *Mother Machree*

A Little Bit of Heaven

Molly Bawn

The Drama of Wonder: Lord Dunsany

Group Reading: *King Argimenes and the Unknown Warrior*

Lennox Robinson and St. John Ervine

Discuss *The White Headed Boy, Mixed Marriage, or Jane
Clegg*

XI. *The American Drama*

Music: Indian Songs, Charles Wakefield Cadman

The Land of the Sky Blue Water

The Moon Drops Low

White Dawn

The Foundations: Howard, Herne, and Fitch

American Characterization and Caricature

Discussion of the Development of the Indian Theme

Comparison of one of the Early Characterizations with *The
Arrow Maker*

Discussion of the Development of the Wild West Theme

Illustration: *The Great Divide*, William Vaughn Moody

XII. *The American Drama, Continued*

Music: Negro Spirituals

Deep River

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot

Roll, Jordan, Roll

Links with the Past: Augustus Thomas, David Belasco,
Owen Davis

Comparison of Davis's Early Melodrama with His Later
Realism

Discussion of *The Detour* or *Ice Bound*

Poetic Drama in America: Josephine Preston Peabody

Group Reading or Production of *The Piper*

XIII. *The American Drama, Continued*

Music: Groups of songs by Stephen Foster

Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming

Old Black Joe

Old Folks at Home

American Characterization and Caricature, Concluded

The Development of the Yankee type

Compare *Brother Jonathan* with *Yankee Fantasies*

American Folk Drama

The Negro: Discuss *The Nigger*, by Sheldon;

Plays by Ridgeley Torrence; *Goat Alley*, by

Culbertson, and *The Emperor Jones*, by O'Neill

Group Reading: *Granny Maumee*, Torrence

XIV. *The American Drama, Continued*

Music: Songs by Carrie Jacobs Bond

Perfect Day

I Love You Truly

A Little Bit o' Honey

The Poetic Fantasy of Percy MacKaye

Discussion or Group Reading of *The Scarecrow*

American Folk Drama, Concluded

Carolina Folk Plays, edited by Frederic Koch

This Fine Pretty World (Kentucky Mountaineers), Percy MacKaye*Hell Bent fer Heaven*, Hatcher Hughes (Pulitzer Prize, 1923)XV. *The American Drama, Continued*

Music: From Edward Alexander Macdowell

*To a Wild Rose**From an Indian Lodge*

Eugene O'Neill and the New American Drama

Prize-Winning American Plays

Group Reading: *The Emperor Jones*,*Anna Christie*,or *Beyond the Horizon*XVI. *The American Drama, Concluded*

Music: Selections from American Opera

The One-Act Play: Susan Glaspell, Alice Gerstenberg, Alice Brown, Zona Gale, Percival Wilde, etc.

Have We an American Drama? Conclusions Based on the Year's Study

Production of Typical One-Act Play or Plays

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